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THE AGE AND THE HOME.

THE season drives us within doors, and presses upon us the question, "What is our age making of Home?" Will the readers of the Monthly spend a few moments with me in looking at the New England homes of our day, their condition and prospects, the disabilities which press upon them, the agencies which may be employed to adorn and build them up, the influences which may even make them at least shadowy types of heavenly homes,—at least the outer courts of bright and peaceful mansions in the House not made with hands?

I shall not commence with the assumption that once there was a perfect New England Home, bathed in sunshine, and redolent with the breath of flowers, and resounding with songs of joy, and proceed to the assertion that, since what are called the old times have passed away, this perfect Home has disappeared from the sight of sorrowing mortals. I do not believe that we ever had any paradise of this sort to lose. Indeed, I can easily reach the conclusion, that many things in the old New England home must have been unspeakably tedious to ingenuous youth, and not in the least conducive

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to the growth of those graces which thrive in an atmosphere of love. I remember myself to have heard once from the lips of the son of a stern Puritan of the strictest possible sect, that he never ventured to make a simple boy's request of his father, to offer so much as a petition for a knife or a ball, without putting it into writing in due form. One can hardly regard such a generation of fathers as exhausting all the genial elements which should be found in the head of a household. The old times are not so different from the new times; only we may hope that the new are a little better. But there are in every age specially favorable and specially unfavorable influences to be cherished or averted by the guardian of the home, and, without attributing all virtues to the fathers, or admitting of the children only degeneracy, we may take a survey of helps and hinderances to the healthy life of that most ancient and most enduring type of society, the Home.

What ought the Home to be, and what ought it to afford? Briefly, the Home should be a house of quiet industry, of practical instruction, of innocent entertainment, of hearty and informal worship; a busy place, and yet a refuge from some of life's sorest and most distracting cares; a school, and yet without the tasks and the taskmasters of scholastic discipline, abounding in pleasures, and yet not appointed and sustained simply to excite and amuse; a church, and yet not so much by any formal exercises as by the unceasing yet scarcely conscious inflowing and outflowing of the very spirit of holiness and love through the simplest words and acts of the every-day life, the bread broken for the hungry, or the cup of water proffered to the thirsty. The Home should be a fortress in other senses than those which the law recognizes, a strong-hold against the intrusions of a world ever bent upon usurpation, and eager to occupy every spot of earth with its industries and its pedantries, with its excitements and its pageants. The material necessities which are provided for by our Homes are designed to be so

many hints and suggestions of more inward and spiritual wants that should be supplied by our household fellowships. Hearts as well as hands are to be joined in love, not only for a day, but so long as the heart liveth. Outward economies should remind us continually of that wise thrift which is ever laying up treasure in heaven, — those costly jewels that are worn in God's own mansions by meek and quiet spirits, those robes of purple and fine linen which Dives cannot purchase with all his wealth, but which Lazarus may have for the asking. The Home is the gathering-place and resting-place, not merely of bodies, but of souls, more than a dormitory or robing-room, or saloon or banquet-hall. You have gone over houses, passing from apartment to apartment, each appropriated to one or another household purpose, and admirably adjusted to meet the special want; and yet in all, and through all, you found no Home, no single spot where the soul could rest its full weight, where hearts could repose from their cares and exercise their fine courtesies. As a pile of stones, a network of timbers, as an expanse of surface for the decorator, as a model of mechanical skill, the building may be everything, and yet it may not be a Home at all; and should it be your lot to *reside* in it, as the word is, you would ever be hoping some day or other to go *home*, to find some place to *live* in, some place in which a man may live and die and be buried from. The value and the charm of an old house are derived from the continual adjustments of outward materials and forms which have been made in obedience to the household necessities. What was at first perhaps angular and dreary, stiff and cold, and scarcely habitable, has been shaped into more graceful proportions, and covered with soft, warm colors. You will be sure to find the nooks and sheltered recesses which contemplation demanded, the cheerful sun-lighted and sun-warmed room for the aged, the infirm, or the saddened, — apartments which seem almost to have fashioned themselves about the inmates to serve the various ends that the Home

proposes. Many generations must live and love and rejoice and suffer within the walls of a house to make it what it should be; the most skilful architect cannot give you outright the plan of such a habitation; they who estimate an old homestead only as so much building material, and are ready, in obedience to every whim of improvement, to speed on the work of its destruction, do not realize how much besides bricks and mortar and timber enters into the fabric of a true dwelling. But I must hasten to add, that a Home is well ordered and discharging its various functions, when its labors are not excessive, and when time, opportunity, and means are afforded for the lessons, the amusements, and the devotions of the household. When the outward and material exigencies of a family absorb and exhaust the best energies of the householders, the ends are sacrificed to the means of living. When out-of-door duties and interests encroach upon domestic pursuits, the home is virtually treated as subordinate, as having no rights when brought into comparison with the aims of commercial enterprise, or professional ambition, or intellectual curiosity, or of that vague entity known as society. What the Home claims is simply its own, the right to close its doors upon occasion, and mind its own business, and teach and amuse its own children, and waste an hour or two, if the thrifty will persist in calling such an expenditure of the time a waste, in trying to make human beings happy. Is it hard for the Home to make good this claim? Are there any strong circumstances in the world's present condition which do not favor, but hinder, the development of a healthy household life? This is our inquiry.

As I have already intimated, it is not my intention to eulogize the past, and to decry the present. I see no occasion for any such procedure. But although there may be no call for a Jeremiade, it may yet be proper to say that there are encroachments by the outside world upon home prerogatives which ought to be faithfully pointed out and

steadily resisted. It is, as we are ever saying, an ambitious, enterprising, laborious, thrifty age, and countries that we call civilized are vast workshops, and most men and women who try to do anything are doing their utmost. Our industry is styled material, and it is busied upon matter, but with the powers of mind, and miracles of art are the results, whilst the work of subduing the earth is pushed into the heart of that Africa which even our childhood was content to regard as a wilderness, and up or down mighty streams, of which, a few years since, we had scarcely heard the names. The pulse of the city has ever tended towards the fever-stroke; cities have never been very quiet places, especially when nourished by commerce or the arts; all the hopeful and all the dreary elements of human life come out into the light of day in crowded streets. But it has not been the case until of late that the fever of the city has spread into the country along iron paths, and by curious nerves of wire; it is only during the past few years that we have been threatened with the loss of that dividing sea which has heretofore cooled the heats of mental excitement, as well as the hot airs of one and the other hemisphere, and are bidden to regard the loss of that measure of privacy which the continents have enjoyed for thousands of years as a great gain. Now this feverish and all-pervading activity threatens that peculiar life of the home which must be by comparison exceedingly quiet, the dwelling of the family becomes a place of wearying labor and care, and the time which belongs to the household is seized by the world. Enterprise is the catchword of the times. One might as well die utterly, and relieve the world of his presence, as not be enterprising. We must all be getting on, as we phrase it; by which we mean, not always happily, rising out of the station into which we were born, however respectable that may be, into a position that is, or seems to be, higher. In all worldly matters, our ambition is unbounded. Housekeepers, merchants, professional men, mechanics, all are ambitious.

Parents are ambitious of intellectual success for their children; children, taking up life where their parents left it, must still move forward; wealth, or the show of wealth, is reckoned indispensable; the smallest dwellings are likely to be, not modest homes, but miniature palaces, and, save in cases of real abundance, solid comforts are sacrificed to gilded emptinesses. Out of these tendencies — which are rather exaggerations and perversions of essentially good elements than radical evils — there have come mischief and grief into our homes. Sometimes a foolish ambition and selfish luxuriousness so far prevail as to prevent altogether the formation of homes, because of the unmanageable expenditures which a life of fashion or of quasi-fashion imposes. Small and plain dwellings, plainly furnished, that simple attire which is so much finer than finery, those modest entertainments which may be repeated again and again without danger of satiety, a practical recognition of the honor and grace that attend domestic labors and make the name of housewife a name of honor, — these do not suit the ambitions of our day, and those who should be building their dwellings are still occupied with counting the cost. It is a condition of things which, as the Scriptures remind us, obtains and justly in the heavens, but it is a very bad condition of things for this world, and those whose examples would have weight in a community where each man is singularly given to doing what his neighbor does, may well ask themselves whether a severer simplicity is not demanded of them, were it only out of regard to their imitators. The utmost that can come of very humble ways and equipage is a failure to win any notice, and for the first years of one's household life this is anything but a misfortune, — indeed, the best thing that can possibly happen to us: then we may perhaps put forth a root that shall bear up wide-spreading branches, and gather up the juices of a heavy foliage and of not a little luscious fruit. And too often, when the experiment of householding is tried, the

energies of the experimenters are all lavished upon the external means and appliances, — they “keep the house,” as they say, but they can hardly be said to live in it, — they have no time left for that; when neatness and elegance and etiquette and luxury have had their portions, the hours are all exhausted. If you would know to what much of all this comes, go into the churchyards and read the gravestones sacred to the memories of many a poor wife and mother, each one of whom sought to do with one pair of hands and one aching brain the work of a legion, and never rested till she reached the last resting-place, — till time was somehow found for her to die in. We want houses to live in, not merely to take charge of; and in estimating the price of any article of luxury, we should add a hundred per cent to its cost by way of provision for safe-keeping and suitable care.

Too much labor, then, the times demand within the household, — more than that quiet, patient, steady, cheerful, methodical industry which one would see realized at home, at least, if nowhere else, — too much labor, leaving no time and no spirits for enjoyment, — too much labor of the hands and brain, leaving no opportunity for the tasks upon which the heart enters so gladly. And the weary come home to the weary, — the care-worn meets the care-worn. The pressure upon a multitude of business and professional men is really frightful; combined with the necessity in many cases of going long distances to their places of duty, it produces little short of an absolute separation from their families, and may gradually establish a positive disrelish for domestic quiet. There are fathers in our community who are almost strangers to their own children, — who do not know one half so much about them as their school-teachers, indeed, can scarcely be said to see them at all except on the Lord's Day, which happily is still kept sacred from most week-day occupations. The appropriate work and play and worship of the home cannot be so much as begun in many

dwelling, and anything is caught at which promises to relieve parents from work which they can find no time to do. Moreover, whilst this excessive laboriousness exhausts the heads of the household, the same weary round must very often be travelled by the children as well. Amongst them also the same mad ambition to get on holds sway. Stimulated by what would seem an unwise appeal to the passion of emulation, spurred on by the offer of school medals, as if our whole social scheme were not one huge, frightful, maddening medal system, the young people commit book after book to memory, and greet you at your coming, not with gay words, kisses, smiles, and questions about common things which you would gladly answer, but with problems in arithmetic, or questions in geography, or even with more abstruse difficulties, — matters, it may be, beyond your own humble shallows. They have no time for household sports, and, if you are not on the watch, are already in school before you have had an opportunity to offer the morning prayer. They are too studious of geography to look at the earth, and too much devoted to astronomy to gaze up at the heavens, and so much given to physiology as to have no time left for the care of their health. They must be got on. The mark is made for the most gifted, and the rest must forever be trying without success to reach it, acquiring a positive disrelish for good learning. In what book of wisdom, sacred or profane, is it written that the active life of man or woman must begin at twenty-one or at eighteen? Why should we insist that precocity shall give the rule to mediocrity, or be impatient with our children if they are in no haste to succeed to the places of men who seem to be in no haste to leave them? Just as the warehouses of commerce are thrusting the family mansion into the suburbs of the city, so the competitions of business, and the ambitious pursuit of knowledge, and the general haste of the times, are restricting the sphere of the home within those quiet rural districts where time is not thought

to be too valuable for unpretending home purposes. Such spots are still to be found, fertile villages and sunny hill-sides graced by old homesteads worthy of the name,—homesteads which are more than “tenements” of so much or so little frontage and depth, capacious, irregular, approached not by a gravelled carriage-way, but only by the scarcely-marked wheel-path through the green yard, well sheltered by our noble elms and by farm buildings of every size and description,—stables for the beasts, barns for the hay, and garner for the corn. Though such an abode may be far from architecturally beautiful, one can have associations with it that would be wholly out of the question within the limits of a city, that has resigned its old gardens to the housebuilder, and banished the children from private play-rooms, and all the old nooks and haunts which childhood loves, to the public gymnasium. There are descendants of Puritans who celebrate Thanksgiving eve in such old and oaken-framed dwellings, as their English ancestors, before they became Puritans, celebrated Christmas Eve in English farm-houses.

It should be added, that the luxurious habits which have inevitably followed an increase of prosperity must be reckoned amongst the hinderances to a true development of household life. The generation that has accumulated wealth seldom learns to expend it with judgment, and is ready to substitute for an attractive simplicity a profusion which vitiates the appetite bodily and mental, destroying even the keen relish of childhood, condemns the young to the satiety and fastidiousness of those who have exhausted in years of enjoyment every fountain of pleasure, and can find nothing new under the sun any longer. A love of display may seriously interfere with the informal amusements and festivities of the home, and prevent the household from enjoying itself at all because it cannot enjoy itself in fashionable ways.

And, moreover, it is a question well deserving to be

asked, whether we are not doing more than is wise to draw away from their homes, to evening lectures and the like, those whose hours belong to their families, and who would be quite as much instructed and entertained by home readings of pleasant books, by music and drawing and household games, as by discourses upon literature and science, which are so often exceedingly superficial, if not positively unsound? Does any one who has a home need a place in which, as the phrase is, "to spend his evenings"? It would seem to be quite as wise, whilst we are providing unions, and libraries, and lectures for homeless apprentices exposed to all the temptations of a city life, to imitate the example of that practical philanthropist, the late Joseph Curtis of New York city, and try to make these young people homeless no longer, by opening for them abiding-places where they can have something more than food and shelter. Lectures and public meetings, religious and secular, are very well in their way, but they are no substitutes for homes, and are very likely to minister to mental and spiritual dissipation. Indeed, every assembling of men and women which comes as a rival to the household, whether it be styled institute or club, or even vestry, should be closely scrutinized, and anything like usurpation of home rights should be stoutly resisted.

And now it is but justice to follow these warnings against encroachments, actual or meditated, by a hearty recognition of what the earnest activity of the times will be sure to accomplish for the Home just in proportion as the good and wise strive to turn the wonderful material and intellectual resources of the age to the best account. Who can tell the multitude of comforts and elegances which modern skill and industry have poured into the dwellings of the humblest classes,—carpets, unknown not many generations since to princes, garments as tasteful as they are cheap, pictures of the different members of the household not equalled for accuracy and beauty by the portraits

which wealth buys of famous artists, letters from absent ones written upon cheap paper and brought by penny mails, the best books, whether for temporary use or for ownership, and to every man who can read, his newspaper. Lord Brougham, in his address delivered before the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, on the 11th of October, 1858, gives many interesting facts relating to the circulation of cheap publications amongst the masses of England. The Penny Magazine, the pioneer amongst journals for the people, had, at the point of its highest circulation, a million of readers, — each paper passing through several hands; and some estimate may be formed of the care with which the work was prepared from the statement made by Lord Brougham, that as much as sixty guineas was paid in one instance for the engraving of a single plate. It seems that there are now circulating weekly in England, amongst 1,200,000 subscribers, nine newspapers for the common people; and, besides these, cheap but very valuable illustrated histories and popular works of science, not to speak of books distinctively religious and reformatory, find their way regularly and in great numbers to the homes of the great multitude of manual laborers. I allude to these things because they are not perhaps quite so familiar as some other matters kindred to them and equally significant, but nearer home. By and by, besides all that has been instanced, the laborer shall have at little or no cost abundance of sun and air, as he now has pure water, artificial heat and light, when they are needed, — many of the benefits promised by association, without the curses that have fallen upon those who, following Owen, Fourier, and Louis Blanc, would caricature creation, and make a new world, instead of making the best of this. The most skilful laborers and the most gifted artists are even now toiling, unconsciously it may be, yet really, to make the Home attractive, — to multiply the sources of refining and instructive pleasures, to give us elegance and a beautiful simplicity in the place of mere

glitter and tawdriness, to connect useful knowledge with amusement, and, by numberless labor-saving inventions, to release from drudgery all who wish to be released, and who will not ingeniously devise some new task as soon as you have discharged them from an old one. The spirit of the age will work no mischief to the children of wisdom.

And now for the conclusion of the whole matter. Suffer no man to despise the home, or to make it second to any human interest or institution. Insist that it shall have time and space, thought and affection,—that it shall be intruded upon neither by the market-place nor by the school, nor even by the church. Let there be time for its duties, its pleasures, its studies, its prayers. It will help on the world unspeakably, if each one who has a household will try to rule it in wisdom and love. Why not make a home for our own children, as well as be ever laboring to secure for them the means with which they can make homes? Household days and opportunities, like everything else in our world, are of brief continuance: they may be gone, unless they are speedily availed of; seize them and turn them to account, and their fruit will be, not for time only, but for eternity as well. When we shall have done our work, whatever it may be, we mean to return to our homes, as the Jews return to Palestine and the wandering Swiss and Tyrolese to Switzerland and the Tyrol, to rest and die. Would it not be better to go home to *live*, to improve the present, to look upon the faces of the children whilst they are still children, to make those wiser and better and happier who may receive so much of their wisdom, goodness, and happiness at our hands?

E.

BIRTH FROM ABOVE.

BIRTH means formation. The progress of every created thing is through the gates of birth. It is not a process, as we inaccurately suppose, that is limited to the animal kingdom and to man, but runs through all the lower departments of nature, as well.

Every blind spherule of mineral matter is gestated into geometrical shape, through the laws of crystallization, as truly as the young of the animal through the laws of animal formation. When the vegetable soul in the planted seed parts asunder its envelope and pushes its green blade into air and life, it is born into this world by essentially the same process as our babes are born. In filling the cycle of its growth, the plant may be said to have several births. Its growth is not a continuous development. The fruit does not come from the seed by a simple and regular progression, but it is reached through certain well-defined and clearly marked stages or steps; first the stem, branches, and leaves, next the blossom, finally the fruit. Each stage is the development of a new set of powers,—the birth of a new organism in the plant. At first it is a mere stem and leaf. If you watch a plant during the spring and early summer, to appearance it lives for the sole purpose of enlarging its stem and multiplying its leaves; and were we ourselves to live no longer, we should conclude, and allowably so, that its growth was completed in this process. Soon, however, the production of foliage is found to be only a preparatory step. As the season advances, another class of organs appear. The development of stem and leaf abates, and the plant covers itself with blossoms. And, lastly, the blossoms yield to fruit and seed again. From the first, the buds, blossoms, and fruit were all in the seed, as integral parts of its idea, but only as possibilities,—as embryos. They cannot be said to have any existence until they are formed or

born, and emerge into the light and air of the world. It would therefore be strictly correct for the botanist or the gardener to say of a seed, that it must pass through successive stages of development,—that it must be born again and again before it can perfect its destiny. It is just so with man. Through physical birth he only enters into instinctive, sensual life.

The new-born babe can eat and sleep like any other animal, but he has no thoughts; he does not reason, and he does not love. He gives no evidence of mind. These faculties are latent and unformed as yet; and he must be born again and again before he can enter the manly life of responsibility, of reason, and of will.

But no one of these changes, whether of the plant, the animal, or the merely natural life of man, is the birth referred to in our text,—the birth “from above.” For these changes do not lift the creature upwards. They are horizontal, rather than ascending developments of life, ending on the same plane whence they begun. The birth from above belongs to the higher life of man.

Man alone, while he absorbs and repeats all the changes of nature below him; while he reproduces all the births and experiences of the mineral kingdom in his osseous or bony framework, of the vegetable kingdom in his fleshly organism, of the animal kingdom in his nervous structure;—while, I say, man is thus the regal self-hood to which all these kingdoms point, and in which they all melt and fuse, all nature confessing itself resumed and epitomized in man, he has superadded another faculty, which makes him a fit child of God, lifts him into full acknowledgment of the Infinite, and at once expresses all the distance between human history and mere animal growth, between man’s eternal progress and nature’s eternal immobility, between the starry splendours of human aspiration and the dull, ungenial fires of mere brute community.

Man alone can rise from nature into spiritual life through

the "birth from above." Foldings are wrapped about us, nature within nature, life within life, hiding the ovaries of the noblest spiritual powers, which must yet come forth, and be born, and unfold themselves through the infinite ages. Spiritual capacities have we, through which, when opened, a power which is out of us and about us sends its eternal utterances into our inmost being.

Not more surely does man's sensuous nature open outward and downward, relating itself to all mineral, all vegetable, all animal forms, than a finer faculty opens inward and upward, through which he is brought in contact with God, and receives ceaseless communications from Him. "Not more surely do the organs of sense bring into his ear the sound of waters, or over his brow the breath of breezes, than his spiritual sense admits to his soul the aura of heaven, and the still and awful beatings from the heart of God." There is in human nature, and in that alone, a germ or capacity made, from the beginning, receptive of the Divine Spirit, and opening upwards towards the spiritual world, even as the plant is receptive of the light and the heat of the solar beams, and opens upward towards the sunshine in which it warms and grows. The animal can never know a superior inspiration to that which his nature devolves upon him, as it devolved upon all his progenitors. He is void of spiritual consciousness, incapable of transcending the natural plane, or of preferring an infinite good to a finite one.

But this is the eternal distinction of man, "that the entire sparkling and melodious universe of sense is but the appanage of his nature, is but the furniture of his proper life," while the inmost of his soul can be vivified by infinite love, and made lustrous with the splendors of God, through the birth that is from above.

The stone, the horse, or the lily which fills the worshipping air with its dazzling sheen, has only a natural existence, essentially finite and perishable. It is a creature of

time and space, outside of all immediate relation to God, of all spiritual lift above the dead level of sense, and never existing by virtue of its inward commerce with infinite Goodness and Truth.

But the opulence of man's nature is such,—it is so veritably grand and august, so filled with inward being, so woven upon the substance of God,—that when we throw off nature as we drop our garments from us at night, and all other things find their ending, our distinctive human life only finds its true beginning. This interior life of man is spoken of by Jesus in his Gospel under various names, as "the treasure laid up in heaven, which neither moth nor rust can corrupt;" as the "pearl of great price," to purchase which a man "sold all that he had;" as the "one thing needful;" as the "kingdom of Heaven," or the "kingdom of God." Jesus declared that a man must be "born from above,"—that is, he must be born into this kingdom, before he can see it, or enter it, or possess it.

And this announcement, like so many other of his teachings, is not the deep and impenetrable mystery that theologians would make it, but the concise presentation of a simple, well-understood, and universal law. It is not even a figurative statement, but a literal fact.

It is the utterance of a great truth in harmony with, and illustrated by, the method and manner in which we gain all our knowledge. Any great division of things, or any large system of truths, is called in common language a kingdom. Thus the three great divisions of natural forms are termed the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms. And we sometimes speak of the great kingdoms of the atmosphere, the ether, the electric and magnetic auras, or the denser forms of solids and fluids. We speak of the kingdoms of sound, of light, of odors, of taste, or of touch. On turning from the material world to the mind, we may consider the trades, the arts, the professions, the sciences, each as kingdoms. And rising yet higher, we may in Scripture phrase

term all that superb field of spiritual relations which link us to God in a nearness more profound than to our own bodies, as "the kingdom of God."

Now how do we enter any of these kingdoms? Is it not by being "born" into them? Is it not by having some sense or faculty, corresponding to the kingdom and capable of receiving impressions from it, developed out of the germ state into formation, birth, and life? A man can only enter the kingdom of light through that part of his nature which is fitted to receive impressions from the light,—through the sense of sight,—through the organism of the eye. If that sense has never been born into actual formation and life, the man can never enter the kingdom of Light.

Of all that mighty ocean of sunshine which on a long summer day floods the earth miles deep with its solar tides, the blind man has no more sensation than the rock upon our coast of the ocean's tide and surge. He stands without that kingdom, for the sense by which alone he enters it is unborn within him. We can only enter the kingdom of sound, with its boundless and inestimable wealth of human speech and many-voiced harmony, through the sense of hearing, by which sounds reach and impress us. And he in whom that sense is wanting and unborn cannot enter the kingdom of sound. So we enter the kingdom of odors, of taste, and of touch, through the birth and growth of those senses in us which can receive impressions from those kingdoms, and only thus.

The same law applies to the kingdoms of mental truth. The peasant or the clown travels up and down over the surface of the earth; he sees beneath him the steadfast soil, and above his head the mighty westering arch over which the sun is slowly rolling. The same divine handwriting is unrolled before his unobservant eyes that meets the exploring gaze of Liebig, Lyell, or Agassiz. But he cannot enter the wondrous kingdoms of chemical, geological, and astronomical truth. His scientific mind is unborn; he has no faculty formed and

active within him that can commune with this class of truths, and see their varied relations and revelations. He cannot map and measure the blue dome above him. The solid substances of nature will not fly apart at his uninstructed touch, and reveal the secrets of their affinities. Nor will the hardened leaves of the earth's crust yield up to his rude questioning the hoary secrets of geologic history. There is no way for him to enter the varied kingdoms of scientific knowledge, but by the birth and growth of that part of his nature which corresponds to those kingdoms and is fitted to commune with them. The kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom. It is composed of all those spiritual and celestial influences which form the wealthy bond of angelic union, which are the life-blood of heaven, and which will make man the image and likeness of his Divine Original. He is fitted to possess and enjoy this heavenly inheritance — this kingdom of God — as fully as he is fitted to possess and enjoy the lower kingdoms of matter and of mind. He has spiritual powers within him fitted to receive impressions from the "kingdom of God," as the eye, the ear, the taste, the smell, the touch, are fitted to receive impressions from the kingdom of matter, or as the mental powers are fitted to receive impressions from the varied realms of scientific truths.

And as your senses must first be formed and your scientific faculties be developed before you can enter the respective kingdoms to which they lead, so your spiritual powers must be born, and grow into habitual and controlling use, before you can pass into the kingdom of God. You cannot see it, nor enter it, without being "born from above."

The kingdom of God is not a realm far off in space, to which the event of death shall introduce us. Death only brings us into the spiritual world, and then, if our higher faculties are unborn, we shall still stand outside of God's kingdom, as a man blind from birth may grope painfully over this broad earth in a rayless and endless night, never

entering the kingdom of light, though it lies all about him, pouring its warm influence upon him, and bathing the world with grandeur and beauty.

Jesus, then, in declaring the solemn and irrevocable conditions of our entrance into the kingdom of Heaven, stated no single and arbitrary fact, but a universal law, confirmed by our experience of the manner in which we gain all our knowledge.

Man can only receive what his open, living faculties fit him to receive, — what his developed powers can bring him into free and open relation with. This, and only this. Thus we see that there is a fixed law, rooted in human nature and human life, that we must be born into every kingdom of Truth, whether of matter, of mind, or of heaven, or we cannot enter into it. Do you ask now how this birth from above can be accomplished by us? How can those sweet and awful senses within us be opened, through which as through a channel the finite human bosom is brought into perfect accord and oneness with the infinite Divine Love, making even our despised bodies the adequate and ample temple of God, and gathering up with every throb of our natural lives the infinite forces of Deity, as wheat is gathered up in a sheaf?

Jesus answers this question in words so clear and so concise that all men can treasure them up and walk by them forever. "Except a man be born from above, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," — thus he states the law. "If thou wouldst enter into eternal life, keep the commandments," — thus he points out the way. "All of the commandments are included in this, Thou shalt love the Lord with thy whole heart and thy neighbor as thyself," — thus he shows us what is meant by the commandments. He covers the whole infinite sphere of religion, of Heaven, and of God by the one word, *Love*.

The law of Love is the sure entrance and the only entrance into eternal life. If we with hearty consent and

co-operation strive to keep this law supremely, in least and in greatest things, — if, undeterred by frequent, nay, incessant defeats, we still struggle on, rising, like David, with new energy after every fall, and clinging closer to the Lord's outstretched arm, — we shall find Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, and the kingdom of God, becoming more and more blessedly and thrillingly *real* to our consciousness. Little by little our selfish aims and ends will be rooted up and cast out, and we will find the work of the higher birth — the work of the soul's regeneration — going gradually on to its blessed completeness.

Day by day, while walking and working on the earth, and fulfilling every duty of the natural life with a more finished faithfulness and a fuller fidelity, we shall feel that we are living in two worlds, mingling with men, and communing with Heaven. And when God's band of angels shall close round us, and at the touch of death the frail walls of matter that now shut us in shall fall away, our eyes shall open and our feet shall stand amid the unveiled and lustrous and unimaginable glories of the kingdom of God!

O my brother and my sister, perplexed about many things, the slaves of selfish habits, drawn hither and thither at the will of hurtful and worldly lusts, gazing at Religion afar off, as at some mysterious and unapproachable thing, look up! There is yet hope for you and for me. Look up to that most Blessed Life written all over with Heaven's great Law of Love; who left his shining home above, and clothed his radiant head with weeds of misery, and drained man's brimming cup of shame, and gathered in his arms the harlot and the outcast, and warmed on his own heart the sobbing and prostrate souls of the lost. Look to Him and strive to keep his Law. Though innumerable times we fail, and our feet stumble and fall in the deeply worn paths of selfish habit, let us but strive the more. Though seventy and seven times in a single day we falter and fail, let us

strive on, let us die striving. Then shall we find that that same Jesus will leave those of his flock whom he hath safely gathered home, and will go through the dark night seeking us, even *us*, the most erring and the most unworthy of all God's children; and when he has found us, he will carry us in his arms, and "there shall be one fold and one shepherd." *

E. M. W.

THE BABES IN THE WOOD.†

PART II.

"But if the children chanced to die
Ere they to age did come,
Their uncle should possess their wealth,
For so the wille did run."

*Old Ballad.*THE UNCLE (*in the Portrait Gallery*).

ALWAYS thou wert my foe, most envied one!
And yet unknowingly! For woman's heart
Not gentler is, nor purer, than was thine!
But thou art gone, — and now, why may not I
Be lord of this fair castle and domain?
A fragile boy of scarce three summers' age —
What more? an infant girl — doth stand between
Me and my pride's ambition! A light touch
May scatter, or a breeze of heaven blight
The tender lily-buds, and — didst thou hear
Unspoken words, mute picture? Ah, thou canst
Not search the deep and secret labyrinths

* Those of our readers who may be desirous of seeing the main idea of this article presented with great clearness, beauty, and power are referred to a published sermon on Regeneration, by Rev. Chauncey Giles of Cincinnati.

† The reader will please refer to the February number (1859) of the Magazine, for the first part of this beautiful little drama. We suppose a Third Part is yet to come. — Eds.

Of this dark, tortured heart! E'en in thy life
Thou wast unconscious of the fire that burned
In smothered flames, hidden from human sight
Down deep in this despairing breast, — a slow,
Consuming anguish, which, in thy calm soul,
Thou couldst not feel nor comprehend! I did
But fancy that thine eye had read my heart's
Most secret thought! Thou too, — thou too art gone,
Pure, lovely Edith! and my vow to thee
Shall be fulfilled! Thou art an angel now,
And I will guard thy tender lily-buds
From blighting, for thy sake!

The Castle Terrace.

BERTHA.

She's gone to Heaven!

EDGAR.

And will she come again?

BERTHA.

Ah, no! my child!

Not here, — but she will wait for thee to come
To her in Heaven.

EDGAR.

Bertha, when shall we go?

Is Heaven where our Nelly lives, — in yon
Dark forest, where sweet posies grow, covered
With fallen leaves, — so she must look to find
Them, as they peep from out their hiding-place?
Then shall we go, dear Bertha, very soon?

BERTHA.

Ah, no! my child! It is too far to find
It now, — but, by and by, you both shall go,
And be with her you love, forevermore!

[BERTHA leads him away.]

THE UNCLE *appears on the terrace.*

Why haunt me thus, tormenting thoughts? Awake,
Asleep, ye come! forever with me! Hence!
Begone! ye temptings of the Evil One!
Cursed through all my life, most deeply curst
I've been, — and, Edith, if my vow to thee
Be broke, I shall be doubly cursed! — Hence!

Evening.

(BERTHA *watches the sleeping babes.*)

BERTHA.

Ah, sad, sad fate, to lose thee, dearest one!
Methinks I weep fountains of tears, that thou
Art gone! Cease, selfish heart, thus to repine!
Thou art far happier now, than dwelling here,
In this dark, gloomy castle, — desolate.
How sweetly now they sleep, fair orphan babes!
And is their mother's dream to be fulfilled?
I cannot hope so! Will they pine away
From sorrow that she comes not? Edgar mourns,
And is almost heart-broken! Ah! he sighs
So deeply now! The little Jane forgets
How many days are gone since her last kiss,
And thinks she'll wake to see her in the morn.
Sleep, little slumberers! Her unseen watch
An angel mother keeps around you! Sleep!

“Reconcile the events of things unto both beings, that is, of this world and the next; so will there not seem so many riddles in Providence, nor various inequalities in the dispensation of things below. If thou dost not anoint thy face, yet put not on sackcloth at the felicities of others.”

VISIT TO THE READING-ROOM OF THE BRITISH
MUSEUM.

I WILL take you, reader, to an institution which not many American travellers have the leisure to visit, but which is one of the noblest and most worthy of Great Britain. I speak of the new Reading-Room of the British Museum. The Museum is itself one of the London lions, and few Americans visit London, I trust, without spending a day among its ample collections; but the library itself is more out of the way, and is not a publicly exhibited curiosity. So I think I shall be on fresh ground, if I give you a little account of this interesting department.

The visitor to the British Museum sees close by that startling statue of Shakespeare, the "eye in fine frenzy rolling," two glass doors, over which are the words "To THE READING-ROOM," and on which are in gilt lettering, "For Readers only." Taking advantage of my guidance, for I am a "reader," and have a bit of pasteboard in my pocket which will admit us, we pass through a long corridor to another pair of glass doors, where a keeper tests our right to enter, and, finding all correct, ushers us into one of the most splendid rooms in the world. When I was in London years ago, and used to study in the Museum library, the old reading-room seemed sumptuous and most convenient; but this one makes the other so insignificant, that I cannot recall even the rudest outlines of its appearance. Well, here you are in a room which is a dome in itself, and nothing but a dome,—rising one hundred feet from the ground, and yet with a diameter of a hundred and forty feet, one foot more than that of St. Peter's at Rome! The top is richly but softly gilded, and all the light of the room falls from those shaded windows which you see there. Climbing up the sides of this great dome are the circling rows of books, about twenty-five feet high, with galleries running around to

accommodate the attendants. There are twenty-five miles of shelving in this room, and eighty thousand books. And yet this is not the quarter of all.

And now, when you have feasted your eyes on the sight of so vast a dome, and of such throngs of books, look at the arrangement on the floor. What are you treading on? I cannot think, unless it be leather, for it is firm, but soft, and has a decidedly leathery look. That deadens all the footfalls, and so the scores of readers and attendants go to and fro, and no student is disturbed. Let us go up into the first gallery that runs around the dome, and look down upon the floor and note its arrangement. It looks like a star, or like the city of Carlsruhe in Germany, if that be a more evident and palpable illustration. In the centre of all is a circular table enclosing a space about twelve feet in diameter, where sits the Superintendent with half a dozen assistants. His throne or dais is elevated about a foot above the floor. Around this is a walk, about five feet broad, and then another circular table, beneath which stands, in huge folios, the catalogue of the library. This table or counter must be over seventy feet in length, and of course is broken up by a number of alleys through it. Outside of this is still another walk, and still another circular table of yet greater length than the last. This too has the ponderous catalogue running along, folio after folio, under it. Thus as you look down upon the whole from above, you see three concentric rings; the inner table for the officers, the outer two for the readers. Of course persons consulting the catalogues can stand on the inside or the outside; that is, nearest the centre of the room, or nearest the walls. I wish I could tell you how many scores of those great folio volumes make up the catalogue, but I cannot. There are so many, however, that very rarely do two readers want the same volume at the same time. Of course they are in manuscript form, and there is only one copy in the world; and yet the rate of increase of books in this library is so

great, that it keeps twelve men busy in writing the slips and pasting them into the catalogue.

Well, let us look a little further into the arrangement of this finest reading-room in the world. Outside of the exterior of these concentric tables runs a path of seven or eight feet in width, and from that radiate to the walls, or rather to the spacious path along by the book-shelves, readers' tables. These are the rays of the star to which I likened the reading-room. Each of these long tables has a partition running its entire length, so that the readers on the one side cannot see those on the other side. This screen serves a number of uses. It contains pipes for hot air in winter, and for a draught of cool air in summer: it has a recess in it for an ink-well and quill-pens: it has two movable and most convenient book-racks for each person. These are so ingenious that I will not attempt to describe. They will hold a book at any height or angle which you may desire, and accommodate you equally well, whether you are reading or copying. Under the table runs a pipe for cold water, to serve as a foot-warmer in winter. The chairs are most luxurious and inviting. Three hundred readers can be accommodated there, and very often the room is full. It is an institution worthy of Great Britain. As old puritanic Boston may rightly be proud of her New Library, so may London and England be proud of the Library and the Reading-Room of the British Museum. This is the only library in Europe, so far as I know, that is not hampered by so many restrictions as to be little availing to the general scholar. I have used those of Paris and Dresden and Berlin, and would rather have a good library of twenty thousand volumes *at my command*, than the hundreds of thousands of those vast collections, under the petty and annoying restrictions which the reader must endure. But the British Museum is open without charge, and most freely. A person who wishes to use the reading-room applies over his signature for permission, and has the

indorsement of some respectable citizen, and the request is immediately granted. Without any expense or any annoyance to the individual, this great collection is freely opened to the British public; and here am I, an American citizen, enjoying the same great advantages.

You will wish to get a glimpse of the *modus operandi*. Do you notice those little slips of blue paper which are just at hand at every yard of the catalogue tables? Tear one off, and you will see on the back the few brief regulations of the reading-room, and on the other, five divisions, in one of which you write the book-mark, that is, the library shelf which contains the volume, then the full title of the work wanted, then the size, then the place and date of publication. Hand that to one of those softly-stepping young men, and take your seat and read your newspaper, or take down one of the twenty thousand volumes which you can reach with your hand as you walk the circuit of the great reading-room. In about half an hour the young man will return: there is your book, or, if you asked for half a dozen or for fifty, there they are: now use them at your will. It is computed that every reader at the Museum consults on an average over six volumes a day. There is absolutely no limit to the number of volumes which can be ordered. I have seen an attendant bring a wheelbarrow-load at a time. All kinds of people come here, and I love to see the kinds of books which are called for. Here comes a gentleman with hair just touched with gray, and with a thoughtful, expressive face. He wants the Latin Chroniclers of the First Crusade. Here comes a smart, stylishly-dressed young fellow, with a goatee and moustaches; he wants one of Bulwer's early novels. A pretty lady, rather carelessly dressed, comes to the table next; she is looking for works of art. So all kinds of people are here: authors and loungers, all are accommodated by this magnificent institution of the British Empire.

There are a hundred details which I would be glad to enter into, which make up the perfectness of this library;

but the limits of my letter will not allow me to say more than this,—that, so far as regards the matter of ventilation, it is so complete that a current of air is being continually forced up behind the books to keep them well aired. With such precautions as these and the like, there is no limit to the time which the valuable collection shall endure. And long may it exist, an honor and source of rich intellectual life to the country from whose munificence it has sprung.

W.

London, October 27th, 1859.

Do we not often find that a halo hovers around the memory of past days, as if they had been seasons of unmingled happiness, or at least of fewer anxieties and sorrows than the present? So they seem as we look back upon them through the mellowing haze of years, softening and blending them into one uniform hue of quiet satisfaction, if not of gladness. Yet when we review and analyze them, we find that their flow was broken by many sorrows, which then were hard to bear, and overshadowed by anxieties which sometimes appalled the heart. Perhaps the memory of some loved one, now removed from us, sheds such a glory over past years, that even the recollection of pain and sorrow is gilded by the thought of her: and are there not those around us now, by whose dear presence our path is brightened,—whose sympathy heightens our joys, and gives us strength and patience to endure every sorrow? May not the years come, when we shall revert to the present time as bright with joys since passed away?

Let us gratefully cherish the memory of the past, thanking God for all its pleasures of love and joy; but let us not be unmindful of present blessings, for they are without number; and every night and every morning should awaken cheerful thanksgiving for the “goodness and mercy” which follow us all the days of our life.

A PLAN OF LIFE.

A SERMON FOR THE NEW YEAR.

BY REV. GEORGE E. ELLIS, D. D.

1 CORINTHIANS vi. 3:—“The things that pertain to this life.”

THERE may be some here present, who, with their other thoughts and feelings on entering upon a New Year, may have raised or recalled in their minds some questions as to their Plan of Life. The Plan of Life,—the principle or method or aim of existence,—let this be our present theme. It is, of course, a theme altogether too extensive for a satisfactory treatment in a sermon, and it is one of those vast and comprehensive subjects on which hints and gleams of wise counsel may more reasonably content us than upon some simpler subjects. It is very difficult to apply an exhaustive wisdom to such a theme, or to find in the exercise of a single mind upon it a train of thought to which the moral sense of any large number of persons will respond. In our common literature there are two prevailing ways, in the one or the other of which this theme is treated; and while all moralists and essayists have dealt with it, many have sounded it too deeply, or have but skimmed over it superficially, whether in prose or poetry.

One prevailing style and tone of writing on the plan of living has produced many dull and dreary volumes, in which theology has swallowed up humanity, and ghostly counsels and rigid severities have been proposed against every natural feeling within us. How sombre and repulsive, to the young especially, are some of those grim treatises which are filled with prohibitions of everything that seems to them most genial, and which require terms utterly arbitrary and unreal to them! There can be no doubt but that the substance and essence of even the most rigid catechism of life are in the main true. But when a code for conduct and

character and business is drawn out into specific rules, for daily toil, and a measured demeanor, and a piety performed by rote, there is something so stiff in the method as to repel most readers, even among the well disposed.

The other prevailing characteristic of many sermons and essays on the plan of life is a sort of rhetorical, sentimental, high-wrought, or exaggerated way of describing human experience, with its various incidents. Life is thus delineated in heroic poetry: and commonplace matters, instead of being treated with that homely simplicity which best befits them, are swollen out with fanciful and foggy rhetoric. We are told about the "mission of life," "the nobility of toil," "the glory of not succeeding," and "the chivalry of self-devotion." We feel, on reading such swollen exaggerations of commonplace cares and experiences, as if we were walking on stilts, and had got elevated above the earth, in a way that made a sure footing in it only the more precarious. When we are seeking to form or amend our plan of living, we do not wish for rhetorical rhapsodies, nor for sombre shades cast from the vanities of mortality, but for some simple, cheerful, practical views, which we may understand, approve, and then put in practice.

And how large a portion of those here present may be supposed to be interested in this theme, or open to instruction from it? That depends very much upon the way in which the theme is entered upon, and the manner in which it engages their attention. It may be well, therefore, to define at once what is meant by a plan or method of living. The theme of course will vary in its general features, according to the audience before which it is treated. For any assembly composed of one class of persons, — the young, or the middle-aged, — belonging to a profession, a trade, or any common calling, — a plan of life might be defined or described in many particulars which must be overlooked in a more general view of it. It seems more difficult to state such a plan as is applicable or available to any large number

of persons, independently of age, circumstances, means, or occupation. Yet there must be a common wisdom, which, like air and bread and water, is needed by us all. Amid the varying elements of human experience and capacity there is a substantial similarity in the virtues which we are all to practise, in the vices which we have all to shun, and in the follies, temptations, duties, rewards, and successes of life.

There is, however, one very embarrassing difficulty which now besets the treatment of all moral themes concerning human life. This is the difficulty of saying what is, and what is not, natural, or in accordance with nature. We say that a great many desires and habits and pursuits are natural to man, which we should find it very hard to vindicate by referring them to any healthful, instinctive action of his original nature. What is natural, and what is unnatural to man? Who can tell us? How can we decide? Where is the tribunal for debating the question? One witness tells us that it is natural for young persons to be giddy, to dread labor or sedateness, to love dissipation, gayety, extravagance, indolence. Another witness says that it is natural for men to love money, to crave the more the more they have of it. And so we may hear various passions or motives or aims in life described as natural to us. What is meant by this? It would not be difficult, I think, to show that many things which are said to be natural to man are in fact extremely artificial, and therefore unnatural to him. The difficulty of estimating or deciding what is natural to man is very much increased by the fact, that the very persons whom we pronounce upon are living amid all the artificial circumstances of a strange and complicated society. We may say that it is natural for savages to bore their noses, and slit their ears, and tattoo or paint their bodies. But we should not consider it natural for us to do so. Now it may be that civilization, the usages of our crowded, struggling, and artificial society, take us as far beyond what is natural to us in one

direction, as savages stray from nature in another direction. We certainly may say that many of the absorbing interests and ends which enter into the plan of life for thousands among us are artificial, not simply and instinctively natural.

Having in view these difficulties in attempting to define a true plan of life for people in general, we can look only for some general counsels. There are great differences to be allowed for in the tastes and capacities of individuals, in their various talents and circumstances, in the necessities of obtaining a livelihood, or in the possession of an independence. For all our present purposes we may define a Plan of Life to mean a method of living according to some well-considered principles, which our honest judgment approves, which will turn our lives to a good account, will guard us from folly, remorse, and shame, and make it on the whole desirable for us at least that we have lived. Anything that will secure those conditions will be a plan of life. If there be those who do not care to secure those conditions, they, of course, cannot be expected to wish to have any plan of life. If they are willing to drift without steering, it will be very difficult to persuade them that there is such a thing as navigation. Their bark of life is their own, and the only person that can steer the vessel is the one that is on board of it, and has his all with him.

To have a plan of life is to infuse as much as possible of a conscious and intelligent choice into the circumstances of our existence, — to know what we wish to be or to do, and to know how to accomplish the wish. There is a plain, reasonable necessity in having such a plan. Every navigator has a chart; every constructor has a model; every architect makes a draught of his work. How can a human being, with all his enginery of passion and all his weaknesses, expect to go comfortably and wisely through existence, amid all its risks and rivalries, without having considered with himself by what method or principle he shall live? Look at the matter for one moment. You steer a ship, you

guide an engine, you prescribe contracts, you enact laws, and how can you expect that you can stumble by instinct, blindly, unconsciously, upon the method by which it will be well for you to spend your days? You would not be safe in any machine that was so left, and you cannot hope to make anything but a miserable jest or wreck out of your own existence, unless you form a plan for it.

Indeed, the wisest and most practical counsel which can be given on this subject is simply in the words, — "Form a Plan for your existence, — have some Principle, Aim, or Method in it." Before all definitions of that Plan, or any rules by which it is to be formed, stands the simple counsel, — Form some plan. The very purpose is the best part of the work. Admit to yourself the necessity of some plan, and you may be almost certain that you will form a good one. I have but little respect for what are called human instincts, but I have a great deal of respect and confidence in human thoughts, that is, when they are cool, clear, and deliberate. I do not believe many persons could deliberately form bad plans for living, — actually foolish and wicked methods of existence. We do indeed speak of persons who calculate unwisely, scheme foolishly, or choose recklessly. But are we certain that they calculate or choose at all? May it not rather be that they are led or driven by impulse, by a giddy heart, by an ignorant rashness, or a hardy obstinacy? For there is indeed something in cool deliberation, in careful, considerate thoughtfulness, in the pause of the mind and the exercise of a reasoning intelligence casting its scrutiny on the way before us, which partakes of true wisdom, and gives promise of good fruit. I have that respect for the working of a sincere mind upon life, which leads me to believe that any one who will take a fit time, and a fair mood, and an honest purpose, and sit down with himself to ask, "What shall be my principle in life?" will come upon the track of something that is good.

Now it is hardly to be expected that any persons, except

such as may happen to be very systematic, methodical, and precise in all their ways, will set before themselves a chart of life, and divide their time mathematically, and govern themselves by formal rules, in their labors, their feelings, their expenses and pleasures. There is certainly no harm, still less is there any folly, or anything to be ridiculed as stiff or formal, in this precise planning out of one's life. On the contrary, some of the largest-minded, most devoted, and most eminent persons have confessed themselves to have been governed by such a rigid method, and good and honored persons in all the walks of life have been indebted to just such a plan for much of their virtue, success, and happiness. Nor can there be a question but that the most stiff and rigid plan of life that could be proposed is infinitely preferable to that reckless, haphazard, and slipshod way in which many persons live as regards their duty, their expenses, their enjoyments, and their characters. Is it not evident that the less we yield ourselves to a mere impulsive, spontaneous, heady tendency in life, and the more of conscious choice, of deliberate and sagacious purpose we infuse into our existence, the more reasonable and safe will be our conduct under all circumstances? And this is especially true in a state of society like our own, where the influence and example of others operate upon us in ways which almost deprive us of our independence, if we do not assert it to ourselves by forming our own plans, and sitting in calm judgment upon the best method of life.

Supposing, however, that no formal, rigid method can be generally recommended, because it would be to some unnatural, and to others stiff, cramping, or oppressive, there must, nevertheless, be a common wisdom applicable in some simple lessons to life. As there are approved rules for discretion, economy, safety, and excellence in every subordinate end or object of existence, there must be a use for a good understanding and a deliberate plan for it as a whole. It is a deplorable thing for any one merely to waste his life,

—how much more of loss and grief that waste involves, who of us can know?

The essential wisdom which enters into a good plan or method of life must be simple and easily put in practice. It may be taken for granted, that every one who seeks conscientiously and deliberately to form a plan of life will sooner or later recognize these three aims: he will wish to be respectable, to be useful, and to succeed eminently, or at least moderately, through his own exertions. His plan will embrace exertion, prosperity, and integrity. No plan of life which does not recognize those three conditions will bear being looked at by a thoughtful mind, or prove satisfactory to any right-principled person. A plan that does embrace them all must be interesting to a large number of all classes around us. Young persons certainly, who are not willing to creep on through existence as mere ciphers, or encumbrances or positive pests of society, must approve such a plan, if they can only be induced to engage their own minds earnestly in it. Indeed, where in all the scenes which society offers is there a finer spectacle, or a more elevated object, than that of a young person using the first glow and pride of mature years to form a good plan of life, a really conscientious and intelligent plan, which embraces true dignity, hearty effort, and the hope of honorable success?

And such a plan may be had in view, not only in youth, but in more advanced stages of life. There are many persons who have got far on upon the probable extent of their existence in a sort of spasmodic, irregular, impulsive way, led from year to year by no fixed methods, through blunders and follies and all sorts of half-purposes. They are, of course, not satisfied with themselves, nor likely ever to be if they go on in the same way. They have alternately fits of folly and fits of wisdom, sometimes very rigid, exact, economical, prudent, at other times reckless, wasteful, and inconsiderate. The simple reason of it all is, that they have never formed any plan of life, nor set before themselves in

order, one by one, the great aims which they should pursue according to their relative value, and the subordinate aims which they should incidentally catch at as opportunity offers, or let go if they require much trouble. These persons may say, It is too late for us to think about a plan of life, as fixed habits and the chain of circumstances have made it impossible for us essentially to alter our course. But, thank God! it is never too late for us to infuse a good, a wiser purpose into our existence, to raise our aims, to purify, elevate, and ennoble these natures which God has given us.

The simple wisdom of a good plan of life will be found to consist chiefly in a method something like this, — to take the common aims of life, which are instinctively, or by force of prevailing custom, the most regarded, to look at them carefully, to clear them of all mere fancies, to distinguish the false and the true in them, and then to follow out the strict, honest, judicious course which will be sure to open itself before us. We shall find at once that there is room and occasion for every one to exercise an independent judgment upon many matters which seem to be settled by public estimate and opinion. It is always well to be influenced in degrees by general opinion, but never to such a degree as to be blindly led in anything. It will be an open question to you through life, how far you are to be influenced by the advice or opinion or example of others. Now we know very well that there are those who will lead us into follies, but will never afford us the least help in getting out of them. It is curious to observe the workings of this fact in speculations, in fashion, in dissipation, in risks of every sort. Therefore it will always be found wise to question all current maxims, all prevailing views of things, — to question them, not for the sake of oddity or eccentricity, but for the sake of safety, and to discover our own way.

There is that one word, Respectability. The definitions which might be given of that word would almost fill a whole dictionary. Sometimes it means a person's clothes,

and sometimes it does not mean even so much as his clothes, but only the shape of them. O, what lures there are in that word, and in other similar words, like "gentility" and "high standing" and "good society,"—what lures there are in them to catch and deceive those who do not interpret the words in their own plan of life by the light of a clear, penetrating, independent, and honest judgment! There is that word, Ambition; its right or wrong use will make all the difference in the world in a plan of life. A just and proper ambition,—call it pride or anything else, if so be you mean what is right by it,—is one of the noblest incentives which civilization brings with it. The pride of independence, of a position honestly gained and well sustained, is commendable everywhere. The lowest form which this Ambition takes is that of mere outward show; the highest, is that of real excellence. The very first condition of respectability is, that a person be able to respect himself. Tried by that test, what a strange overturning would there be of our social standards, as they apply to individuals, on the score of respectability! We must learn to try ourselves by it.

One of the first things to be settled, then, in a plan of life, is to draw the line between mere outward accomplishments, adornments, and attractions, and real, sterling acquisitions of every kind. All that gives grace and refinement and elegance to character and life is to be greatly desired; but such things are to be made the fruits of its labors and virtues, not the substitutes for them. It makes a great difference in one's plan of life whether he aims for a life of pleasure, or seeks only to enjoy the healthful and innocent pleasure which comes as the result of exertion and usefulness. In our artificial society there are some who are born to, or who easily obtain, the means of lavish expense and luxury, and who, without any wrong to themselves or others, can gather about them all the elegances of life. The sight of these is a temptation to many, which makes them envy the enjoy-

ment, while it renders labor and effort and self-denial distasteful. And so there grows up a class of persons—a class always increasing—who make wealth their standard, and regard it chiefly as a means of outward display. Here is room for the honest action of an independent mind. Do not follow in this the example of any one, till you have distinguished the true from the false in all the show which is worn upon the face of things.

Exertion, effort, employment of some kind, steadily, constantly, and cheerfully pursued,—that is the staple element of a good plan of life. Call it work, call it even a task if you please, but face it manfully, meet it day by day, as you value your true respectability and success. We often hear the uneasy and the dissatisfied speak of the tasks of life as drudgery. Well, there is no denying that there is a sameness and a weariness about any uniform employment. And if any will show us how to rid ourselves of that without having to bear something worse, we should be glad to hear of it. But after all, what is called the drudgery of any daily employment often lies rather in the reluctant, restless spirit with which it is engaged in, than in anything hard in the work itself. Now it stands to reason that, in our artificial state of society, there must be a close subdivision of employments, that they must be regularly and systematically performed, that all must be diligent and faithful in their own spheres, in order that society may prosper, and the vast sum of general good may be divided into its ten thousand little rills, which will convey to every family and every individual the blessed rewards of industry and healthful comfort.

There is weariness and exhaustion in any steady employment, and sometimes the most diligent and earnest will become depressed under the daily pressure of care. But if we can in this way fairly meet our portion in life's needful discipline, and suffer nothing worse, let us be thankful. The daily blessing comes with the daily occupation, and

can be secured from nothing else. And suppose we could take a public vote, that all these trades and professions and slavish tasks were unnecessary, and should all give up our work, what would become of us? Have we not all as good a right to do this as any have? And what is the result to those who evade the exertion and the task of life? Do they win success and honor? Do they find satisfaction in indolence, or pleasure, or dissipation? No; when they forego employment, they also forego respectability, success, honor, and inward comfort. Their life becomes a waste. They generally die young, and it is better on the whole that they should. Or if they live to age, they run down into insignificance and poverty. Their shattered frames show that something beside care and labor will wear men out, and their dreary, friendless state shows that they have outlived their gay companionship.

Yet while we thus in our Plan of Life face with a cheerful purpose the daily tasks of some honorable, useful work, we must be careful not to grow to our employment, nor to become a part of our tools. We must endeavor to cultivate a genial nature, to be something out of our employment as well as in it, to provide ourselves with resources, to refine and improve our characters, and to do justice to all the softening influences of social life. We cannot all be scholars, nor do we need to be; for a scholar is far from being the highest exhibition of man. We cannot all be persons of taste or accomplishments, and the mere dabblers in such matters are positive nuisances in society. But we can all have a Plan of Life which, after answering the ends of business, shall enable us to cultivate more or less our social, friendly, neighborly feelings, our unselfish feelings, our public spirit. It is, after all, the order in which the desirable ends of life are to be pursued,—the order of them,—which shall stand first, and what second, and so on,—it is this which is the great condition of a good Plan of Life. Duty, this is first by every law of God and of reason, and the

successive parts of our plan are but contingent, because prosperity and wealth and success and happiness are ever uncertain in this world.

Now this or any other good Plan of Life must have a law, a foundation principle, a serious, solemn conviction, to help in forming it, and, what is more, to encourage and secure the performance of it. And there is a strong reluctance in many minds to face a serious view of life. Self-will, pleasure, carelessness, folly, all conspire to countenance many in trifling with life, or at least in thinking that it is of no great consequence whether it bring anything to pass for time or eternity. Now that some who have attempted to give a serious view of life have given only a gloomy, repulsive view of it, and have gathered frightful bugbears about it, may be allowed. But, after all, it is a serious thing to live, that is, to live many years amid all the risks and responsibilities of society. And religion is not the only thing that makes life serious and solemn. Far, far otherwise. Indeed, we have all of us, religious or irreligious, to meet about the same amount of seriousness, to have about as many thoughtful or sombre hours, in the course of life. The seriousness which religion gives to life, a reasonable, truly Christian view of it, is far less sombre or solemn than the seriousness which attends folly or self-reproach, or even an idle, unprofitable life. Is there any seriousness which exceeds in deep, wretched sadness that of an unprincipled or abandoned man in some hour of self-reproach, when by those mysterious workings of the memory the fair visions of an innocent youth come back to him, all tattered and stained by his later depravity? Is there any seriousness more appalling than that with which the gambler turns from an unsuccessful cast, and owns himself a beggar, a fool, a madman? Is there any seriousness more bitter than that of the victim of intemperance when the stings of his own vice pierce him, and he feels that he is imbruted and self-destroyed? Is there any seriousness in religion, any sadness in it, worse

than that of any bad habit, any folly, any way of wasting life? Seriousness! we must all yield to it in some shape, for it is the shadow of the spirit cast upon this earthly life; it is the token of a heart that the earth cannot satisfy, of a desire that existence here does not fill.

Let us admit seriousness, then, into our Plan of Life. And let it find us willing, yes, glad to hear what it will counsel us. Its tones are solemn: we need them. Its words are warnings: they will do us good. Their echoes vibrate through the days of the year that has closed; their lessons address us as we enter upon the year that has begun. "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind: be sober, and hope to the end," for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

RESURRECTION OF THE NATURAL BODY.

THE student of the New Testament must be aware that the notion of the resurrection of dead bodies is nowhere recognized nor implied. The resurrection of the dead is enounced by Christ, and philosophically expounded by St. Paul. The resurrection of the flesh not only is not asserted, but virtually denied. We shall rise in "spiritual bodies," since "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." It becomes a very interesting inquiry, Whence originated this dogma of a resurrection of dead bodies? how came it in the Christian Church? and why is it tenaciously retained?

At the time of Christ's appearing there were three principal sects among the Jews,—the Pharisees, the Essenes, and the Sadducees. The first believed in the resurrection of the material body; the second believed in the immortality of the soul, and future rewards and punishments, but rejected with horror the Pharisaic notion of the resurrection; the

third believed in no future state at all, denying the existence both of spirits and angels. That the Pharisees derived their doctrine from their own Scriptures it would be vain to assert, for it is nowhere to be found in them. The only passage which has any appearance of lending it support is Job xix. 25-27, and this is by a false rendering, as any one may see by reference to Dr. Noyes's exceedingly lucid translation. It was not a doctrine of the early Hebrews, and was not found among the Jews until after the Babylonish captivity. It appears abundantly in the Talmud, the Jewish commentary on the Hebrew Scriptures, but not in the Scriptures themselves.

It is interesting to know that the doctrine in all its grossness was held by a sect of the Chaldæans at the time of the Jewish captivity. The Magians or Fire-worshippers had existed for a long time before, and their religion was reformed by Zoroaster, probably not long previous to the reign of Cyrus. Their creed was, that there are two principles, one of Light and one of Darkness, both contending for the supremacy of this world. The good at death go away to the abodes of Light; the bad are dragged down into Darkness; but the day will come when the bodies of all men will be raised, and reconstructed from the dust, and purified for the souls which had been separated from them to re-enter and dwell in on the renovated Earth.* They believed the heavenly bodies to be animated with souls, and worshipped the sun under the symbol of fire, which was ever kept burning upon their altars.

After the restoration from the captivity this doctrine of the resurrection of dead bodies appears among the Jews,

* Prideaux's *Connexion*, Vol. I. p. 196. The *Zend-Avesta*, by Anquetil du Perron, as quoted by Dr. Bailey, Vol. II. p. 412. Either Dr. Prideaux's authorities misled him, or the *Zend-Avesta* of Perron does not give the genuine theory of Zoroaster. According to the former authority, he believed in the everlasting punishment of the wicked; according to the latter, in their ultimate purification and happiness. It is agreed, however, that he taught the resurrection of the natural body.

and it was an essential article in the creed of the Pharisees. They did not hold it, however, precisely as the Magians held it. The Magians believed that all souls, good and bad, would find their lost bodies, and live happily upon the Earth. The Pharisees believed that all souls would be raised out of Hades to a judgment upon the Earth, but only the righteous would find their bodies again and live happily in a terrestrial Paradise; the wicked would be thrust down again without their bodies, and be shut up in Gehenna, the lowest region of Hades, to remain there forever.*

Such was the state of opinion when the Christian Church was formed, partly from Jewish converts, believers already in the resurrection of the natural body. The dogma, however, does not appear in the primitive Christian Church. The Apostolic fathers, that is, the Christian fathers who lived in the age immediately succeeding that of the Apostles themselves, — Barnabas, Clement, and Ignatius particularly, — speak of the resurrection, but only as Christ and his Apostles had done. They say nothing of the resurrection of dead bodies. The truth is, as we suppose, it had not been made a matter of thought and investigation, and no theories had been formed about it. The Jewish converts would naturally put a Jewish interpretation upon the words; the others would not philosophize upon the subject at all, while the glory of the ascended Christ was yet open to their vision and absorbed them into it. It was no time to build theories while the heart was warm, and immortality was not a matter of speculation, but of sight. Towards the close of the second century, however, a change becomes apparent, and we hear for the first time under Christianity of "the resurrection of the flesh." The old Jewish dogma is reproduced with this addition, that not the righteous only, but also the wicked, will be clothed in their lost bodies at the judgment day, the former to dwell in Paradise, the lat-

* Josephus, Wars, II. 10. 14.

ter to burn, body as well as soul, in everlasting fire. How this change was brought about, and why the Jewish dogma was reproduced in all its grossness, is obvious enough. A controversy, and a very sharp one, arose on this very point between the Gnostics and the Apologists for the Christian faith, in the process of which theories must be formed, sides must be taken, and opinions distinctly defined. The Gnostics were the earliest corrupters of Christianity. They were the Hegelians of the early Church, accepting all its creeds and symbols, but emptying them of their native meaning, and filling them out again with their own wild and dreamy speculations. One of their notions was the essential evil of matter, and hence they poured contempt upon the natural body. The flesh is the prison of the soul, and keeps it in darkness and corruption. They denied, not merely the resurrection of Christ, but his incarnation. The real Christ was never clothed in flesh; it was only an appearance. These are the heretics to whom St. John is supposed to refer in his anathema against those who confess not "that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh."* They travestied the whole doctrine of the resurrection as the Church held it, and resolved the language of Christ and Paul into a figure of speech. It only meant a moral resurrection, a rise out of sin into holiness and virtue. Taking up the Jewish dogma as they found it latent in the minds of Christians, they raked it with the keen and subtile logic which they were masters of, and whenever they fell in with a Christian believer, especially among the simple and unlearned, they were pretty sure to stagger him at this weak and vulnerable point.

Against these wily antagonists, Tertullian undertook the defence of the Christian faith. He was a native of Carthage, born not far from A. D. 150, and flourished, therefore, about the close of the second century. He was a convert from heathenism. His mind was coarse, rugged, full of

* 1 John iv. 3.

African fire, and dwelt doggedly in the literal sense. He wrote specially against the Gnostics. His treatise, *De Resurrectione Carnis*, takes the extreme Jewish position, and maintains, in its utmost literalism, the resurrection of the flesh. Sometimes his argument rises into strength and grandeur. "Look now," says he, "at the examples of the Divine power. Day dies into night, and on all sides is buried in darkness. The glory of the world is dishonored; everything that exists is covered with blackness; all things are rendered mean, silent, and torpid; there is a general mourning, a cessation of all business. Thus the lost light is mourned for. And yet again it revives with its own ornament and dowry with the sun, the same as before, whole and entire; slaying its own death, night; bursting its sepulchre, the darkness; coming forth the heir to itself, until night revives with its own accompaniments. The rays of the stars are rekindled which the morning glow had extinguished. The absent constellations are brought back, which the destruction of time had taken away. The mirrors of the moon are re-adorned, which the monthly number had worn away. The winters and summers revolve, and springs and autumns, with their own powers, habits, and fruits. Earth receives instructions from heaven to clothe the trees, after they have been stripped; to color the flowers afresh; again to bring forth the herbage; to exhibit the same seeds that had been taken away, and not to exhibit them before they are taken away. Wonderful procedure! from a defrauder to become a preserver; that she may restore, she takes away; that she may guard, she destroys; that she may retain entire, she injures; that she may increase, she consumes. Nothing perishes but for salvation. Therefore this whole revolving order of things is an attestation to the resurrection of the dead. God wrote it in his works before he wrote it in his word."*

* Neander's *Planting and Antignostikus*, Vol. II. pp. 485, 486, Bohn's edition.

From the year 170 onward, this doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh appears with greater and greater distinctness. It appears at first faintly, in private summaries of belief; more distinctly after the controversy with the Gnostics. The first professed *creed*, however, in which it is found, is one drawn up by the arch-heretic Arius, about A. D. 327; and the first public creed which contains it is that of the Council of Constantinople, A. D. 381.* Dr. Sykes seems to lay too much stress upon this fact; for the reason why it was not sooner put into the public creeds doubtless was, that it was not deemed necessary, since it had not been extensively denied by Christian believers. Like many other doctrines, there was no philosophy about it until controversy made it a subject of investigation.

Once fairly inducted, it did not fail to gather about it the absurdities and fantasies for which it has a strong natural affinity. It became a question, whether the same flesh would rise again; whether it would have the same form and sex; at what age it would rise; whether it would be the body that died and was buried, or some other of the series which the soul had occupied; whether souls would know their own bodies by instinct; and what would prevent the body from burning up and decomposing when roasted in hell-fire. On these points, the unbelievers did not fail to tax all the ingenuity of the faithful. Tertullian maintained that the identical dead body would rise again, particle for particle; and Origen is said to have believed that bodies would rise in globular shape, as if rolling were an easier or better method of locomotion than walking. Augustine argues that burning material bodies will not necessarily destroy them; he knows of worms that can be boiled in water without hurting them in the least. Thomas Aquinas thinks the identical substance will come up out of the grave that was put into it. The unbelievers were gen-

* Dr. Sykes's Enquiry.

erally silenced, or rather evaded, by remanding all difficulties and contradictions to the Divine Omnipotence.

It is quite possible, as some writers have imagined, that the dogma of a fleshly resurrection was borrowed by the Jews from the Magians, and by the Christians from the Jews; but we do not think that this accounts sufficiently for its genesis and descent to the Christian Church. How came the Magians by it? for they are said to be the first and the only heathen that ever held it. They held it in company with kindred and cognate ideas. They had first sunk God in nature, and worshipped nature in the sun, moon, and stars, and hence their only conception of a real and tangible immortality was on the plane of nature, and for this the dead bodies must stand up again upon the earth. The Jews believed it only after the glory of Israel had waned, and they were looking for a temporal Messiah. The Christian Church received it, or at least developed it, after her day of childlike faith had passed. There is a common genesis for all such heresies, and a common soil for them to germinate and grow in. *It is the tendency of the carnal mind to carnalize the truths of the Divine Word.* It is wisely permitted, in order that those truths may not sink out of sight and be entirely lost. It broke the descent of the Magians toward Atheism; it broke that of the Pharisees towards blank Sadduceeism; it gave the Christian Church a foothold, and saved it from sliding into Gnosticism. A carnalized faith is better than none at all, and to believe in the resurrection of the flesh is better than to lose sight of the eternal realities, or turn them into dreams and shadows.

It is a singular fact, however, that the idea of a *spiritual body*, distinct from the natural, and always investing the soul, is most plainly set forth in the writings of these Christian fathers. They seem to have had no notion of a disembodied state after death. Man still lives, and lives in human form, and with a bodily organization, after the material coverings have been laid in the grave. "Spirits after death,"

says Irenæus, "have a body adapted to their condition the same as before." Tertullian himself affirms the doctrine in its full integrity: "If souls be sensible of pain after death, and tormented with fire, then must they needs have some corporeity, for incorporeality suffers nothing." Origen affirms the same thing.* Augustine distinctly recognizes it: "Unde et spirituali erunt: non quia corpora esse desistent, sed quia spiritu vivificante subsistent."† They will be spiritual, not because they will cease to be bodies, but because they will subsist by the quickening spirit. The majority of the fathers believed, too, that angels live in substantial bodies. Why they did not perceive that these ideas rendered entirely nugatory their notion of a resurrection of the flesh, it is difficult to imagine, unless, as is probably the case, they regarded matter as more real than spirit-substance, and the natural world more truly and brightly existent than the spiritual, and supposed, therefore, like the heathen, that departed spirits pined to get back to its glorious domains.

After the Reformation this notion of the resurrection of the flesh could not fail to be scrutinized and re-examined. In 1678 Dr. Cudworth's "Intellectual System" was published, — one of the grandest monuments of learning in the English language. In this he devotes over a hundred pages to the subject of the spiritual or celestial body, in which he shows that not only the ancient philosophers, but most of the Christian fathers, believed that man lives in human form after death; and their reasonings are set forth in such clear array, that the notion of a resurrection of the flesh sinks into unimportance. It became doubtful whether he really believed it, and his great work provoked replies from the orthodox, who charged him with bringing the doctrine into peril. They might well be alarmed, for the best English thinkers came to doubt it, as both unphilosophical and unscriptural, and to treat it as a lifeless tradition.

* Cudworth's *Intellectual System*, Ch. V. Sec. III.

† *De Civ. Dei*, LXIII, CXXII.

In the system of Swedenborg it not only is excluded altogether, but it is so driven out before the brightness of a more heavenly gospel that it looks too dingy and death-like ever to return. Swedenborg unfolds with scientific precision the doctrine of DEGREES OF LIFE. The spiritual world into which men enter at death is not a sublimation of the natural, not matter attenuated and rarefied, but a world *discreted* from this, having bodies differing in *genus* from natural ones, but a world more substantial, phenomenal, and brightly real. That is the substance, in fact, while this is only the adumbration of its realities, and shows them in dim types and representations. The soul itself of every regenerated man, even while yet in the flesh, is ultimated in a celestial body, the exponent and image of its own intrinsic life, and the flesh only clogs and conceals its bursting glories. Heaven is already entered, and the celestial body put on, and death only takes the concealments of the flesh away. Just the opposite takes place with the souls that love and do evil and put on corruption. They shape to themselves a spiritual body, the exact effigy of their spiritual state, not to be burned in literal fire, but in the deforming lusts which even now waste the beauty of form and degrade it towards the bestial. And all this appears openly when the flesh falls off, and the man is drawn to his like in the other world. The bodies we shall wear eternally are not manufactured, but put on from within, even as the forms of tree or flower are the ultimations of its evolving life, or as the forms and the dress of the angels are the outshaping and the outrobing of the Christ who has been received within. Swedenborg does not make matter essentially evil and poisonous, as the Gnostics did; but he, like Paul, makes spirit-substance and spirit forms in the heavenly state the shapings of a more plastic life, in the transparency of a purer atmosphere, and the flush of a more celestial beauty, so that to come back to the earth in quest of the "flesh" we have put off, would be like the insect glit-

tering in the morning light coming back to find the scales of the larva it had lost, and the loss of which gave freedom to its wings.

The doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh has been so shattered and dishonored, and is so utterly destitute of scientific basis, that it is seldom asserted now in its full grossness and literalism. But it is adhered to "in a sense" as important. It will not be given up readily, and never in express terms. The reasons of this it is not very difficult to perceive.

The resurrection of the flesh is an idea which enters essentially into a system of theology, and it could not be taken out without great danger of loosening all the stones of the building. A general judgment of the assembled universe, a second literal coming of Christ, the conflagration of the world, its renovation for the abode of the risen saints in the millennial era, and in a terrestrial paradise, the punishment of the wicked in a local material hell, — all these are concomitants of the resurrection of the flesh. Not only so: the whole scheme of salvation is made to hinge upon it. Men in material bodies can be admitted to a localized heaven or excluded from it, not according to what they *are*, but according to what they *believe*. They can be punished vicariously, and the whole plan of a substitutive atonement here comes in. All that kind of preaching which may be called *scenic* — appealing to sense or a sensuous imagination, and which undoubtedly has been most effective with the popular mind — requires the doctrine as a part of its machinery. In short, the resurrection of the natural body, under Christianity, even as under Judaism, and under the Magian religion, connects itself organically with a system of naturalized theology.

On the other hand, if man rises in a spiritual body at death, never more to come back again to the natural plane of existence, who does not see that the doctrine gathers and organizes around it a cluster of higher truths of transcendent

importance? There can be no vicarious atonement, no artificial appointments to heaven and hell. Heaven and hell are formed and developed from within; we are putting on now the beauty of the one or the deformities of the other, according to the shape into which our spirit-forms are growing and maturing every day. A good life is perfecting the one, an evil life is hastening on the other. Christ saves us from within, as we receive and obey him, and from within outward clothes us in linen clean and white. The spirit-world is not a shadow, but a great reality; we are in it now,—the veils of sense only hide it; we draw the angels around us as we become like them, or the fiends as we become like them, and death will lift up the curtain to show us the awful gulf between, and remand us to the society we have chosen. Christ cannot save us vicariously, but only as we receive his life in living worship and manifest and live it, and so put on the angel from him. He will come to judgment, not at the graveyards a thousand years hence, but in the spiritual world we enter at death; not with the blare of literal trumpets, but the influx of his truth, that explores us and shows our quality, and separates us, not by an outward rule, but by a spiritual law, to heaven or hell, as one or the other has been formed within us. In short, this other doctrine of the resurrection connects itself organically with a spiritual Christianity.

So long as men live in sense, and judge spiritual things by sensual, they will have a sensualized religion, for they can have no other. When they can believe that the soul is a more intense reality than its dress and concomitants, the spirit-world more substantial than the material which is its type and shadow,—that it is already within us, and “broods over like the day,”—then spiritual Christianity will exclude its old corruptions, even as the spiritual body excludes the flesh as its death-robe when it needs it no more.

WINTER SUNSET.

By graceful scrolls of ice-like, pearly blue,
And streaks of violet-red, like new-born flame,
Damp heaps of gathered stubble leaping through,
Pale gold in lengthening bars, and many a hue,
Shifting too suddenly for eye to mark,
On leaden-colored wave-clouds, thick and dark,
As nearer still the hastening sunset drew,
I knew when dreary, wild November came.

With musing heart I watched the beautiful sight,
While the gold brightened, while the young fire blazed,
Till all had vanished, twilight sunk to night,
And star by star hung out its lonely light
O'er fields of dark to stretch a monarch ray,
Like beacon-light across the mariner's way ;
But ere the evening glory took its flight,
Some peaceful thoughts breathed on me as I gazed.

Dread not of earthly change the wintry night ;
Be faith in God thy bosom's constant guest ;
Go not self-panoplied to stormy fight,
Nor stay encastled in presumptuous might ;
Thy God's pavilion stretches o'er thee still ;
In coming darkness he will work his will ;
With lifted eye behold the clouds now bright
With hues that harbinger the pilgrim's rest.

Warm-housed, with curtains down and fresh-trimmed light,
Or hurrying home with mantle-shielded eyes,
Shivering and chattering, we miss the sight
Of beauty in the wintry sky, more bright
Than in the spring or summer time we see ;
And as a vision came these thoughts to me
In the fair eve of that November night,
When looking on that sheen of numberless dyes.

R.

RANDOM READINGS.

LOOKING FORWARD.

EIGHTEEN hundred and sixty reminds us of our promise, one year ago, to the readers of the Monthly Magazine, to do what we could to furnish a religious periodical for family reading, to cheer, admonish, quicken, help along in the pilgrimage of life, and make the light of heaven shine more visibly upon it. So we have tried through one year's experience, and we set out anew with fresh resolves.

We believe our readers must understand now what we wish to do, and how we wish to do it, and we shall not take up time in defining positions, or turning aside to answer any one's misapprehensions. We have seen misstatements enough about our humble efforts, which we thought it best to disregard and ignore. We shall probably do the same in future, aiming to teach Christ positively and not controversially, and with all the individual freedom which is needed in an ever-progressive life and an ever-brightening faith.

Hail to the New Year! "Hope rules a land forever green." So the land looks to you, reader, from this new peak of time, from which you see a little farther down the avenue into the eternity that is before. But the future, in outward contingencies, will be as the past. Sorrow, disappointment, and death are there, as well as delight, fruition, and joy. But let us bear this in mind, — our real future is folded up within us. What we shall be must be the development of what we are, and by pausing here for strong resolve and earnest prayer for a newly consecrated life, we may be sure to render the present hour a most auspicious omen of the bliss to come. s.

THE GOSPEL THE LIGHT OF OUR YEARS.

WE find in a writer, who is as suggestive as he is paradoxical, as profitable to quicken as he would be unprofitable to control our thoughts, — we mean John Ruskin, — the following significant paragraphs: —

"These are much sadder ages than the early ones, — not sadder in

a noble and deep way, but in a dim, wearied way, — the way of *ennui* and jaded intellect, and uncomfortableness of soul and body. The Middle Ages had their wars and agonies, but also intense delights. Their gold was dashed with blood; but ours is sprinkled with dust. Their life was interwoven with white and purple; ours is one seamless stuff of brown. Not that we are without apparent festivity, but festivity more or less forced, mistaken, uncultured, incomplete, — not of the heart. How wonderfully, since Shakespeare's time, have we lost the power of laughing at bad jests! The very finish of our wit belies our gaiety.

"The profoundest reason of this darkness of heart is, I believe, our want of faith. There never yet was a generation of men (savage or civilized) who, taken as a body, so wofully fulfilled the words, 'having no hope, and without God in the world,' as the present civilized European race. A red Indian or Otaheitan savage has more sense of a divine existence round him, or government over him, than the plurality of refined Londoners and Parisians; and those among us who may in some sense be led to believe, are divided almost without exception into two broad classes, — Romanist and Puritan, — who, but for the interference of the unbelieving portions of society, would, either of them, reduce the other sect as speedily as possible to ashes; the Romanist having always done so whenever he could, from the beginning of their separation, and the Puritan, at this time, holding himself in complacent expectation of the destruction of Rome by volcanic fire. Such division as this between persons nominally of one religion — that is to say, believing in the same God and the same Revelation — cannot but become a stumbling-block of the gravest kind to all thoughtful and far-sighted men, — a stumbling-block which they can only surmount under the most favorable circumstances of early education. Hence, nearly all our powerful men in this age of the world are unbelievers; — the best of them in doubt and misery; the worst in reckless defiance; the plurality in plodding hesitation, doing, as well as they can, what practical work lies ready to their hands. Most of our scientific men are in this last class; our popular authors either set themselves definitely against all religious forms, pleading for simply truth and benevolence (Thackeray, Dickens), or give themselves up to bitter, fruitless statement of facts (De Balzac), or surface painting (Scott), or careless blasphemy, sad or smiling (Byron, Beranger). Our earnest poets and deepest thinkers are

doubtful and indignant (Tennyson, Carlyle); one or two anchored, indeed, but anxious or weeping (Wordsworth, Mrs. Browning); and of these the first is not so sure of his anchor but that now and then it drags with him, even to make him cry out, —

‘ Great God, I had rather be
A pagan suckled in some creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn.’”

The prose-poet, Digby, in his elaborate work upon the Ages of Faith, by which he means the ages during which the Romish Church still held unbroken sway over Christendom, makes the same complaint, and proposes a similar explanation of the evil complained of, only with him the Protestants are the sad ones, and a return to Romanism must be the cure for their sadness, if it is to be cured. Now, leaving out of the account all exaggerations and partisanship, there is a truth here which well deserves to be pondered. So far as the age is especially sad, — if this is indeed the case, — we must say that the confusions and misgivings of the soul are largely the cause of the sadness, or, refusing to entertain this comparison of past with present, we shall nevertheless find it true for all times that religiousness and joyousness belong together.

And yet let us qualify our statement a little, — let us admit that there is a gladness which certainly would not be aided by religion. We mean the cheer which accompanies youth and health, a happy temperament, and a favored lot, — the contentment which has been disturbed by no changes and chances, the joy of children and of childlike or childish men and women. If it were best for us to find in our earth only a vast playground or pleasure-garden, if it were best that our tools should all be toys, and our books all picture-books, and life an endless fête-day, it is likely that the solemnities of religion would be found intrusive. And yet the joy of children is by no means complete or lasting. It is broken by grief as passionate as the gladness is exuberant. A trifle calls it forth, a trifle causes it utterly to cease, and the darkness is as profound as the light was resplendent. Indeed, the sorrows of the young predict their future greatness, and even amidst the sweet sounds of their mirth we catch the note of sadness which announces the inevitable tragedy of our life. Religion does not set herself always and persistently to invade this

child-world, and call out those who dwell in and are content with it to be her saints and heroes. She is not unwilling to bide her time; presently they who are light-hearted and at ease now shall have need enough of her, when the summer-days begin to be numbered, and the flowers droop, and the tempest gathers. Let there be a time to laugh; let the young rejoice in their youth; let us not insist that they shall have only sermons upon great truths and solemn duties, only be sure that when the soul awakes, and the season of childhood is over, an earnest word shall be ready for the opened ear.

But sooner or later the day of thoughtfulness comes, and now if we would have joy and peace,—happy days, happy New-Years,—it must be not as children, but as men and women, and our thankfulness for the gift of life, and our satisfaction in it, will be in proportion to the depth and genuineness of our Christian piety. If we are to rejoice at all in this world of ours, if we are to find pleasure in a being too great to be other than tragic, it must be as believers in God and in the Son of God.

The Gospel is the light of our years. The Gospel helps us to keep festal time, because it establishes us in the firm persuasion that God doeth all things well; that this world in which we live is his world as well as our world; that it went forth from his hand, not as an experiment of uncertain issue, but as the complete expression of a wisdom which seeth the end in the beginning, and cannot err,—of a love which can propose and do no harm to any creature. We profess no skill to explain the mystery of our life. Sin and sorrow meet us at every turn, violated law and broken peace. Whether we have any religious convictions or not, we do not find the world just the place where one would say without misgivings to his fellow, A happy New Year to you! We meet in houses of worship and chant our *jubilates*; we gather in pleasant dwellings, where the light shines down upon innocent and happy faces, and all looks glad and beautiful;—but who can forget, be he Christian or Gentile, the outer darkness? Who would like to leave one of our thousands of homes of purity, love, and cheerfulness, on some day of rejoicing and giving, and visit those quarters of the city where the wretched and the vicious are heaped together, a seething mass of corruption? Who can keep his thoughts from wandering sometimes in those directions, or refrain from the question, What right have I to laugh, whilst so many weep? Have the days yet come in our world when we can be

glad, and betake ourselves to amusements? Ought not life to be an unbroken crusade, carried forward in fear and sorrow? Now we can meet this state of mind only with the word of Christian faith. If we believe in God, we have no need to explain His world. If we have confidence in an earthly friend, his strangest works do not perplex us, and we are sure that they are better than they seem. A true piety carries the soul back to a Perfection which, whilst it suffers and indeed stimulates activity to realize every ideal, and to supply every deficiency in our human circumstances, is nevertheless our assurance that the world we live in was wisely planned, and is lovingly guided, and that to be gloomy and desperate over it comes not of faith, but of faithlessness, not of the humility which waits, but of the conceit and haste that virtually sit in judgment upon God, and this before the time. We most frankly confess, that if, in the little knowledge of our poor mind, we were making a world, it would not be such a one as this. But, happily, not man, rather the All-wise and All-loving God, in whom the pious heart believes, made the world and us who live in it, with all our fine humanities and brave aspirations, the wisdom and the mercy which lift us up so high that we look down sadly and despairingly upon God our Creator's works. O for that rebuking word of St. Paul to chide our halting faith! "Shall the thing formed say unto Him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" What is it to thee, though the almighty and ever-blessed God has not seen fit to make all thy fellow-worms to be presently wise men, and saintly men, and happy men? Have faith in God, and when he deigns to tell thee, who but yesterday had not been called forth from nothingness, that, in this world, which naturally enough looks confused and strange to thee, all things are working together for good to those who love Him, believe and give thanks, and eat thy bread with a merry heart, and try to realize as once it was given to an over-anxious man to know, that as God took care of the world ages upon ages before thou wast in it, so it is likely he will be able to care for it now and evermore without thee, and to conduct it to its great issues when the places which have known thee shall know thee no more forever! So the Gospel bids us trust in God, and do good, and lean not upon our own understanding, or make knowledge the indispensable condition of peace. Thankfulness and joyfulness have been realized in times whose light, compared with that of our day, was but thick darkness. "If thou faint," saith the Scripture, "in the day of adversity, thy strength is small." It is not what we see, but what we believe, that must sustain us.

The Gospel is the light of our years, because it is the soul's deliverance from its worst enemy, — the enemy that threatens death. How can I keep festal time, some one may ask, when my sins press heavily upon me? and is it not the office of a wise piety to convict me more and more of sin? Most certainly this is one function of the Gospel, but, thank God! not the only one, and not by virtue of this is it a Gospel indeed. The new life, which is by Christ, is gladdened by the persuasion that through him the penitent have obtained the forgiveness of sins, and it is enriched by an unfailing tide of love, flowing into the soul from the very fountain-head of living waters, — a tide which must needs bring fertility and beauty wherever it takes its way. A soul that is overcoming evil by the grace of Christ will be of good cheer, even though as yet the victory is by no means complete, and the contest threatens to last a lifetime. The Gospel was a cause of great joy, from the very first, to Jews and Gentiles who were able to receive it; for though it made them realize as they had never realized before the extent and the enormity of the world's degradation, it gave them new power to endure, new energy to labor, the faith and hope which save men in the darkest times, and make heathen ages days of miracles and of the kingdom of God. If the Gospel is a Gospel at all, it is something more than a threat of vengeance to be executed upon the sinner. It proclaims a Saviour. It saith, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people. Every true Christian fast will be followed by a Christian thanksgiving, and the day of rejoicing will be as bright as the day of penitence was dark. Religion does not make us sinners, and if its Law shows us the measure of our transgression, and so slays, its Christ suffers and forgives and inspires, and so we live again, and as we never lived before. A gloomy, ascetic stoicism, or a hard-featured Puritanism, is not a genuine Christianity. If our life were purely and only tragic, the Creator would have hung the heavens with a funeral pall, and have sent the wind of the desert to consume the flowers, and have hushed all the birds of the air, save the ill-boding owl. Abraham was glad because he saw in the future the day of Christ; and now that the day is come, let us not change it into a night of weeping. They may be ages of conscientiousness, but they are not ages of faith, which allow no time and place for festivity, and conscientiousness without faith presently heightens into madness.

E.

THE SUSPENSE AND RESTORATION OF FAITH.

WE would bespeak a careful reading for the following extract from an article in the *Episcopal Quarterly*, by Rev. John Cotton Smith, late Assistant Minister on the Greene Foundation, Trinity Church, Boston, in whose removal to New York our city has sustained a very serious loss.

If we could have an Episcopal Church reconstructed according to the ideal herein set forth, there would be, we are confident, large bodies of Christians who would desire nothing more. But the good time is, we fear, far off.

"A great difficulty in reference to a common understanding and reception of historic Christianity has arisen from the fact, that men have failed to distinguish between what they hold as a systematic statement of their theology, and what they hold as a simple statement of the two great facts of revealed religion,—the Fall and the Redemption. A system of theology, although it may be exceedingly desirable, is, to a great extent, a matter of opinion. It is not a simple statement of the truths of revelation, but there is in it a very large proportion of the human element of philosophy, and of conclusions dependent upon long trains of reasoning. Such systems, we admit, are exceedingly important, but they have been unwarrantably elevated into an importance to which they have no claim; so that they have been held as of the essence of Christianity itself, and conformity to them required as a test of communion in the Christian Church. We have thus had an exhibition of the extraordinary spectacle of "covenants of faith," which required as a condition of membership in a Christian Church a belief in certain articles, which the very framers of the articles themselves would not claim to be essential to a saving faith in Christ. When men come to understand that there is a distinction to be made between a system of theology and a simple statement of the fundamental principles of Christianity, and that a man may hold his particular system of theology without having a Church committed to it, and may retain his connection with historic Christianity by the reception of these universally acknowledged fundamental truths; then we shall find that a union upon the basis of historic Christianity is something practicable and likely to be attained. But so long as matters of opinion are made as important as matters of faith, and the deductions of human reason are considered as bind-

ing as the simple statements of revelation, just so long will it be impossible to bring historic Christianity into its proper place, as the doctrinal system of the Universal Church. Historic Christianity indorses no elaborate theological systems. It knows only the simplest elements of the Christian faith.

"In what we have said of historic Christianity we shall not be understood as discrediting in the slightest degree the great Protestant principles, that the Scriptures are the only Rule of Faith, and that the right of private judgment is to be maintained. Each one must be free to find his own creed in the Word of God; but it is his privilege certainly, if he chooses to do so, to interpret the Scriptures by the light, and confirm his own judgment by the testimony of all ages of the Christian Church.

"There would be no difficulty in determining what the fundamental principles of Christianity are, if it was made a question simply of the interpretation of the Scriptures; or what is the testimony of historic Christianity, if the question were made one merely of history. But, beside this, we are to inquire what materials are within our reach out of which may be constructed the external form of the Church of the Future. The grand conditions which, upon Dr. Bellows's general principles, must be essential to this form, are, that it shall impose no unnecessary restrictions; and that it shall have its roots in existing institutions, thus connecting it with the whole past of the Christian Church. The problem is to construct, or to find already constructed, an organization by which these conditions shall be satisfied, and in which historic Christianity may be or is already enshrined.

"The business of constructing a Catholic Church one would think to be, in this age of the world, a well-nigh hopeless undertaking. Dr. Bellows has no expectation of accomplishing it. The fact is, if there is not a Catholic Church already, we never shall have one, and a common basis of union, in a living body, will be forever impossible.

"We are to seek, therefore, for the elements of it in what already exists. Our search is to be made among existing institutions to find, if possible, the germ of historic Christianity in a Catholic Church. Dr. Bellows furnishes us with some valuable assistance in this respect by intimating where the nearest approach is made to a satisfaction of the great want which he has so eloquently described. We take his own words. In the *Sequel to the Suspense of Faith* he says:

'I think it [the Episcopal Church in this country] the most respectable church organization in Protestant Christendom, and the best entitled to imitation and adoption if any model is to prevail.'

"It would be hardly respectful to Dr. Bellows not to follow out the suggestion he has so generously made. We wish, therefore, to inquire what elements there are in the Episcopal Church in this country which are favorable to this great cause of union, and which fit it to be the rallying-ground of Christians.

"It is important, in the first place, to ascertain what is absolutely essential to the Episcopal Church, because objections against such of its rites, usages, or principles as are local or temporary are not objections against the Church itself. We hold, therefore, that what is essential to the Church is the historic form and the historic doctrine, which make it precisely that historic and comprehensive Church for which so many of the best minds of the age are seeking. Those who are outside of the Church are apt to take it for granted that the historic form of the Church in an episcopally constituted ministry necessarily involves all the evils which have been connected with the assumptions of the Papacy, or the peculiarities of a State Church. They are apt to take it for granted, also, that the Church, as such, is committed to some system of doctrine, some considering the theology of the Church as essentially Arminian, and others as essentially Calvinistic. Whereas the truth is, that all that is essential in the form of the Church is the episcopally constituted ministry for the preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments; and all that is absolutely essential in its doctrine is in the fundamental, evangelical truths of the Scriptures, as expressed in the Apostles' Creed. This is all which reason, aided by the testimony of all Christian ages, can find in the Bible as essential elements of the Church. We shall not be understood, of course, as saying that there are no other distinctive peculiarities of the Episcopal Church. And we would take this opportunity to dissent from the idea of enlarging the basis of the Church by hastily sacrificing or attempting to reform peculiarities which have become distinctive. We feel thus because it is our earnest conviction that these very peculiarities which are objected to will finally be the very things which will commend the Church to the better judgment and taste of the age. But the point which we wish to make is this, that there is scarcely any serious objection entertained anywhere to what is really essential in the Episcopal Church, since

all acknowledge the validity of Episcopal ordination, even if they do not hold to its necessity; and certainly all Evangelical Christians accept the statements of the Apostles' Creed.

"No other Christian body surely occupies a position so favorable to unity. The essential features of the various denominations are such that they cannot unite with each other without ignoring or abandoning their essential characteristics. But the absolutely essential elements of the Episcopal Church would require no sacrifice which a believer in the fundamental verities of Christianity need hesitate to make.

"We know it will be said that practically the distinction which we make between that which is absolutely essential and those peculiarities which have become distinctive in the Church is worthless, for these very distinctive peculiarities, so long as we retain them, are as insuperable obstacles to union as if they were essential features in the Church. But it is certainly something gained, it seems to us, to have it understood, that they do not constitute the essence of the Church, and that under the pressure of some mighty emergency, like that of the entering in of large bodies of Christians, they might be, so far at least as these bodies were concerned, modified or dispensed with altogether. This is a very different thing, however, from inviting a return by such modifications and proposed reforms, since these would only have the effect of pandering to the very evil which union is intended to cure."

THE ATHENS OF AMERICA AND THE ATHENS OF GREECE.

PASSING, the other evening, our noble public library, I was much cheered as the bright light streamed out upon me from the windows, and I looked in upon the comfortable group of readers, gathered in a room which looked almost hospitable. Yes, cheered and uplifted too into not a little pride of heart. How our world is moving onward! said I to myself. What a noble sequel is this to our grand system of public instruction, and how secure is the civilization which takes such pains to foster the intelligence of the people! Perhaps my thought was reasonable enough, and yet let us be on our guard against conceit. You who are called modern Athenians by those who would honestly commend, or mischievously flatter, or sneeringly depreciate, go into your famous Library, and take from the shelves Grote's His-

tory of Greece, and read as follows: "Without pretending to determine with numerical accuracy how many dramas were composed in each year, the general fact of unexampled abundance in the productions of the tragic Muse is both authentic and interesting. . . . Moreover, what is not less important to notice, all this abundance found its way to the minds of the great body of the citizens, not excepting the poorest. . . . We cannot doubt that the effect of these compositions upon the public sympathies, as well as upon the public judgment and intelligence, must have been beneficial and moralizing in a high degree. Though the subjects and persons are legendary, the relations between them are all human and simple, exalted above the level of humanity only in such measure as to present a stronger claim to the hearer's admiration or pity. So powerful a body of poetical influence has probably never been brought to act upon the emotions of any other population; and when we consider the extraordinary beauty of these immortal compositions which first stamped tragedy as a separate department of poetry, and gave to it a dignity never since reached, we shall be satisfied that the tastes, the sentiments, and the intellectual standard of the Athenian multitude must have been sensibly improved and exalted by such lessons. The reception of such pleasures through the eye and the ear, as well as amidst a sympathizing crowd, was a fact of no small importance in the mental history of Athens. It contributed to exalt their imagination, like the grand edifices and ornaments added during the same period to their Acropolis." Has not the Athens of America lost as well as gained something? We do not say, Go to the theatre and see, but only, Read the play-bills!

E.

"GUIDE not the hand of God, nor order the finger of the Almighty unto thy will and pleasure; but sit quiet in the soft showers of Providence and favorable distributions in this world, either to thyself or others. And since not only judgments have their errands, but mercies their commissions, snatch not at every favor, nor think thyself passed by if they fall upon thy neighbor."

NOTICES OF BOOKS.

The Life and Correspondence of Thomas Arnold, D. D., late Head-Master of Rugby School, and Regius Professor of Modern History in the University of Oxford. By ARTHUR PENRHYN STANLEY, M. A., Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the University of Oxford. In two volumes. Third American, from the last London Edition. Boston: Ticknor and Fields. 1860.—It is too late in the day to commend to all who crave the guidance and inspiration of a wise and faithful Christian life this admirable biography of the late Dr. Arnold. It occupies one of the highest places in the literature of Christian civilization, and is the book of all others which we would put into the hands of young students, in the belief that it would foster and direct aright every generous impulse of our better nature. The form and mechanical execution of the edition before us leave nothing to be desired, and a good index makes the contents of the volumes sufficiently accessible. E.

Goethe's Correspondence with a Child. Boston: Ticknor and Fields. 1860.—The "child" was some twenty-two years of age,—what we should call growing old, in this youthful land; and certainly she was not the slave of conventionalities, or in any sense more "proper" than she should have been. We sincerely hope that the republication will not, like the first issue of the book, send our damsels to sentimentalize under every green tree, or to perch in the branches of our forests, or in less fitting places. We cannot say that Bettine, child or woman, is much after our heart; but the book is a curiosity of literature, and contains many bright and suggestive thoughts. The choice paper and typography must make the present edition a standard one. E.

Gotthold's Emblems; or, Invisible Things understood by Things that are made. By CHRISTIAN SCRIVER, Minister of Magdeburg in 1671. Translated from the twenty-eighth German Edition, by the Rev. ROBERT MENZIES, Hoddam, England. Boston: Gould and Lincoln. 1860.—It is a book to be taken up for occasional moments of quiet meditation, when one would rather nourish the heart than stimulate or

exercise the mind; and its hold upon the contemplative is sure. We think that one would grow weary of a man who should be forever "improving" little incidents, and when the "improvements" are set down in order until we have a bookful of them; unless the talker is a Luther or a Selden, we are ready to say, It is enough! Therefore let the "Emblems" lie on your table, and take them up in the pauses of your life. They will often save you from an expression of impatience at the lingering of some slow one. E.

History of Independence Hall: from the Earliest Period to the Present Time. Embracing Biographies of the Immortal Signers of the Declaration of Independence, with Historical Sketches of the Sacred Relics preserved in that Sanctuary of American Freedom. By D. W. BELISLE. Philadelphia: James Challen and Son.—The author has made a really interesting book, and one which will be of much service to our young people. That some of the paragraphs were written with a quill from the wing of our nation's bird is what could hardly have been avoided in the circumstances. E.

Sir Rohan's Ghost. A Romance. Boston: J. E. Tilton & Co. 1860.—The plot is a painful one, but the writer has made it less so by his really fine powers, which we may hope will be exercised upon a more attractive subject. Why will not our authors give us books which one would be glad to read aloud in the family circle?

New Miscellanies. By CHARLES KINGSLEY, Rector of Eversley, Chaplain in Ordinary to the Queen. Boston: Ticknor and Fields. 1860.—The many enthusiastic admirers of this wise and genial and large-hearted man, who is doing his utmost, through the press as well as by the pulpit, to preach to his age a practical Gospel of the Divine Kingdom on earth, will be glad to have these fugitives marshalled into a goodly company. E.

Reminiscences of Rufus Choate, the Great American Advocate. By EDWARD G. PARKER. New York: Mason Brothers. 1860.—Mr. Parker has brought together a large amount of very interesting matter in this book of "Reminiscences." Of course, in so large a collection of library and street talk there will be some trivialities (see pages 277 and 216); but these are only the inevitable accompaniments of a Boswellian loyalty.

The Sea of Ice ; or, The Arctic Adventurers. By PERCY B. ST. JOHN. Boston : Mayhew and Baker. 1859. — It is a book which holds the attention of children by the fascination of stirring incidents, and at the same time enlarges their store of useful knowledge.

Mayhew and Baker also republish *Alice Learmont, or a Mother's Love*, by the popular author of "John Halifax, Gentleman," and the elder children will find it a pleasant fairy tale.

The King of the Golden River, or the Black Brothers, a Legend of Stiria. By JOHN RUSKIN. Illustrated by Richard Doyle. — This work appears from the same firm, in a style well worthy of so charming a story. It will prove one of the most attractive books of the season, and, like every really good book for children, will interest the fathers and mothers as well as the younger portion of the family.

E.

The Summer-House Series. Our Summer-House, and What was said and done in it. By the Author of "Violet," "Daisy," etc. Boston : Brown, Taggard, and Chase. — Those who read "Violet" and "Daisy," and know what the letters "C. S. W." stand for, will need no further commendation of this book, which is simple without being silly, and instructive without being heavy.

The same firm publish "The Life of Whitenose Woodchuck, by Uncle Faunus," the story of whose fortunes and misfortunes the children will follow with much enjoyment ; also "Swiss Pictures," a well-written and attractive introduction to the stirring History of Switzerland, which most of us, old and young, would do well to read. For those whose hands cannot hold larger books, Brown, Taggard and Chase issue "My Own Little Library," in blue and gold. E.

Fourteen Pet Goslings, and other Pretty Stories of my Childhood. By FRANK. With Designs by Billings. Boston : J. E. Tilton & Co. — Also, *Life and Adventures of Dandy Jack*, and *Wanderings in Elf-Land* ; — the real and the ideal, — the former the more attractive of the two.

E.

The Boy Tar ; or, A Voyage in the Dark. By CAPTAIN MAYNE REID, Author of "The Desert Home." With twelve Illustrations, by Chas. L. Keene. Boston : Ticknor and Fields. 1860. — Captain Reid's books are so promptly caught up by the children that one can

hardly get permission to read and judge them. This volume falls behind no one of the rest in power to interest, and is only a little too "sensational."

E.

Frank Wildman's Adventures on Land and Water. By FREDERICK GERSTAECKER. Translated and Revised by LASCELÆS WRAXALL. With eight Illustrations printed in oil colors. Boston: Crosby, Nichols, & Co. 1860.—A very spirited volume, and all the better, we have no doubt, for the translator's pruning hand, which might have been applied even more frequently to advantage.

E.

The Percy Family. Through Scotland and England. By DANIEL C. EDDY. Boston: Andrew F. Graves. 1860.—A very entertaining book of travels for children, and animated by a true spirit.

E.

Alice's Dream. A Tale of Christmas Time. By MARY ANN WHITAKER. Boston: Walker, Wise, & Co. 1860.—A little book which may be safely commended to all who are making up libraries for the nursery or for the Sunday school.

E.

Hesper the Home Spirit. A Simple Story of Household Labor and Love. By ELIZABETH DOTEN. Boston: Abel Tompkins; Brown, Taggard, and Chase. 1859.—It is an admirable tale of the unknown virtuous.

E.

Two Christmas Celebrations. A. D. I. and MDCCCLV. A Christmas Story for MDCCCLVI. By THEODORE PARKER, Minister of the Twenty-Eighth Congregational Society of Boston. Boston: Rufus Leighton, Jr. 1859.—This little book displays a great deal of kindly feeling; but there are things in it which we would not on any account set before the eyes of children, and, Christmas story though it be, we have put it out of sight.

E.

Friends in Council: a Series of Readings and Discourse thereon. A New Series. Reprinted from the English Edition. 2 vols. Boston and Cambridge: James Munroe & Co. 1860.—These little volumes are the very books for one who, without desiring to engage in severe study, would yet have his mind occupied with a specific topic, as when a gifted and fascinating talker engages our thoughts. The current of style flows on smoothly and pleasantly, and if the

waters do not seem to be very deep, it is largely because they are very clear, and make no unnecessary stir as they move. E.

The Anastasis of the Dead; or, Philosophy of Human Immortality, as deduced from the Teachings of the Scripture Writers in reference to "The Resurrection." By JASON LEWIS. Boston: A. Tompkins. 1860. — Honest and painstaking in matter and manner, Mr. Lewis is not quite clerkly enough for the few, nor quite popular enough for the many, and his Anglicized Greek has an uncouth and repulsive look. Nevertheless his book will be of service to students of Scripture, even though they may vehemently dissent from some of his conclusions. E.

Sketches of New England Divines. By REV. D. SHERMAN. New York: Carlton and Porter. 1860. — We like very much the tone of Mr. Sherman's Preface, and have found the biographies, so far as we have been able to examine them, quite readable. They are not, and do not claim to be, the results of original investigation, and one who wished to understand thoroughly any controverted point would need to look further; but they will stir the heart, even when they do not quite satisfy the understanding, and are a useful addition to our popular religious literature. E.

A Liturgy, with a Collection of Hymns and Chants, for the Use of Sunday Schools. By JAMES LOMBARD. Boston: Abel Tompkins. 1860. — The author of this Liturgy has been, as it seems to us, quite successful in a very difficult undertaking. Reverent in tone, penetrated by a deep sense of our unworthiness in the sight of God, and yet not desponding or thankless, the devotional sentences are such as a thoughtful child might utter, and are fitted to educate the less thoughtful to soberness. The collection of hymns includes many which have found universal favor. E.

The White Hills; their Legends, Landscape, and Poetry. By THOMAS STARR KING. With sixty Illustrations, engraved by Andrew from Drawings by Wheelock. Boston: Crosby, Nichols, & Co. 1860. — The luxury of the book almost equals the luxury of the journey to our famous New England Hills. As a guide to those who are yet to make this pilgrimage for the first time, or to those who would repeat their visit to better purpose than before; as an aid

to all who would summon up the forms of beauty and sublimity by which the mountain and the valley still live in the image chambers of the soul; as a descriptive book for those who shall never see these glories save with the eyes of others, — these fair and pictured pages will be very valuable. New England, borrowing such help as she might from lovers of nature and masters of song beyond her borders, has paid a large instalment of her great debt to those majestic hills. The mechanical execution is in every way worthy of a work of permanent value and of rare beauty.

E.

Hits at American Whims and Hints for Home Use. By FREDERIC W. SAWYER, Author of "A Plea for Amusements." Boston: Walker, Wise, & Co. — Mr. Sawyer is a genial, hopeful writer, not disposed, we should judge, to grapple with problems or to explore mysteries, but much devoted to common sense, and animated by a strong faith in those various social economies which greatly alleviate, if they do not radically cure, the evils of civilization and the miseries of humanity.

E.

Haste to the Rescue; or, Work while it is Day. By MRS. CHARLES W. With Preface by the Author of "English Hearts and English Hands." And *The Missing Link, or Bible Women in the Homes of the London Poor.* By L. N. R., Author of "The Book and its Story." New York: Robert Carter and Brothers. 1859. — These are valuable contributions to the cause of a practical Christian philanthropy which is not content to deal in abstractions, and dream in churches, and then pass by on the other side when the blasphemer comes in the way of the homeward-bound worshipper.

The same firm issue *Brook Farm, the Amusing and Memorable of American Country Life*; not the "Brook Farm" near Boston, but something more in harmony with the realities of a world which, under God, has grown to be what it is, and was not made to order for the nonce by any company of men. It is a book which will "carry sunshine and help to clear away shadows."

The Life of Lafayette. Written for Children. By E. CECIL. With six Illustrations. Boston: Crosby, Nichols, & Co. 1860. — The story of Lafayette has an undying interest for young and old in that nation for which he so manfully devoted himself. This little book contains all that the children need to know of our country's friend, told in a simple and intelligible way.

E. •

Graham Lectures. Human Society; its Providential Structure, Relations, and Offices. Eight Lectures, delivered at the Brooklyn Institute, Brooklyn, N. Y. By F. D. HUNTINGTON, D. D. New York: Robert Carter and Brothers. 1860.—This book comes to our hands late in the month; but as it was our good fortune to be a listener when the Lectures were repeated under the auspices of the Lowell Institute, we can speak confidently of their value. They are marked by breadth of treatment, practical insight, force and beauty of statement, a certain concrete quality, and, what is more than all, they are the words of one who believes that our world is from God, and belongs to God, and has been given by him to Christ, to be fashioned into a Divine Kingdom through the grace of the Spirit of Power and Love, ever living and ever working. They will instruct and encourage the reader, and, unlike too many discourses upon society, do not leave us perplexed. E.

The following books came into our hands too late for examination, and we must reserve a notice of them for our next number:—

Jesus the Interpreter of Nature; and Other Sermons. By Thomas Hill. Boston: Walker, Wise, & Co., 245 Washington Street. 1860.

Christian Believing and Living. Sermons by F. D. Huntington, D. D., Preacher to the University, and Plummer Professor of Christian Morals in Harvard College. Boston: Crosby, Nichols, & Co., 117 Washington Street. 1860.

Self-Help; with Illustrations of Character and Conduct. By Samuel Smiles, Author of the Life of George Stephenson. Boston: Ticknor and Fields. 1860.

From the same firm, Ernest Bracebridge; or, Schoolboy Days. By W. H. G. Kingston. And The Professor at the Breakfast-Table. By everybody knows who.

All the Children's Library, from Walker, Wise, & Co., shall receive careful attention.

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